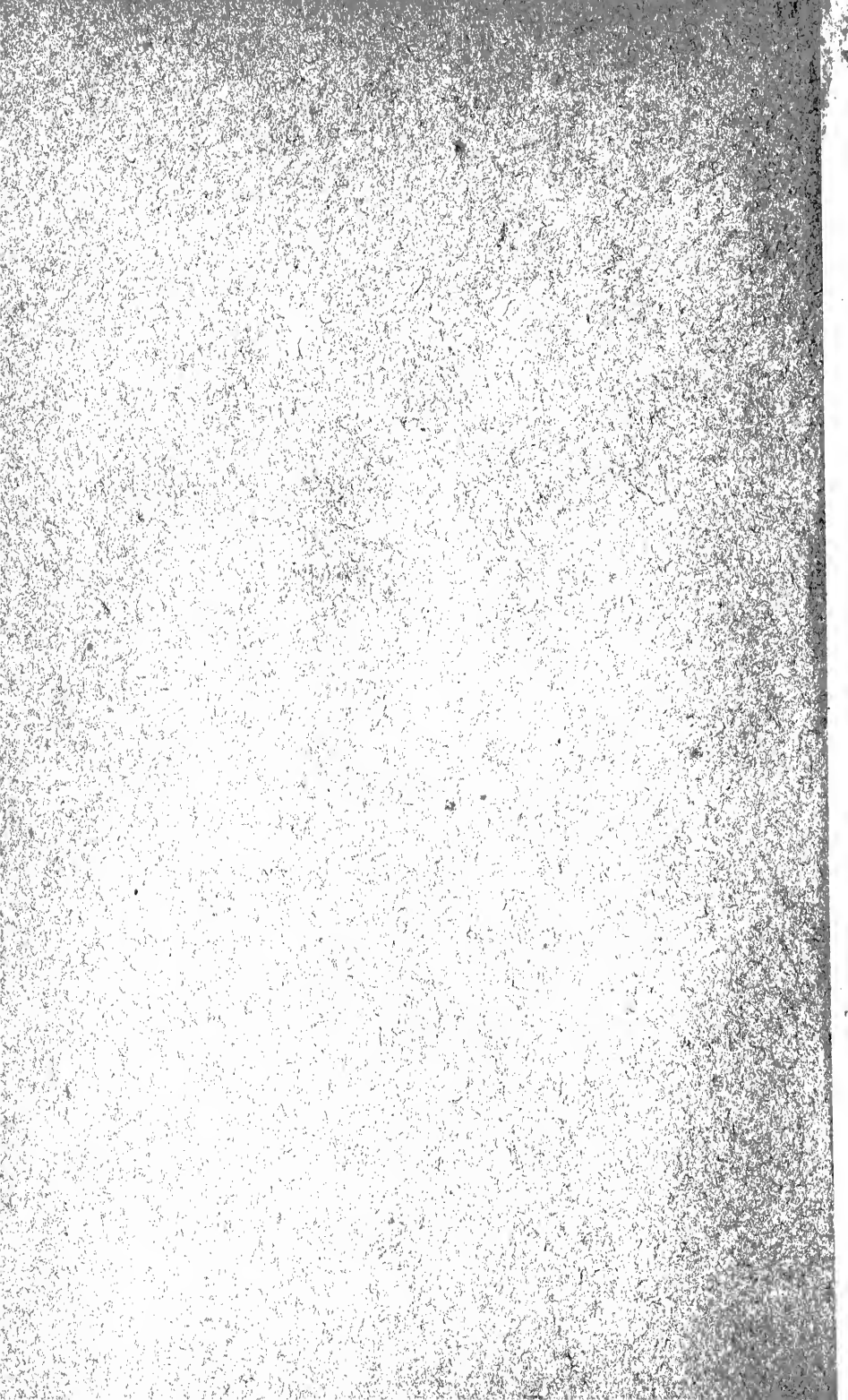




"All the world's a stage"

The
Disconsolate Monarch
by
Everard Roberts

Printed Privately
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THE DISCONSOLATE MONARCH

A DRAMATIC COMPOSITION
IN SIX ACTS

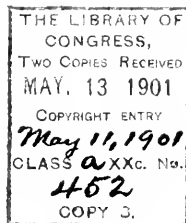
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MADE IN
CHINA

THE DISCONSOLATE MONARCH

PERSONS REPRESENTED

K.

DUKE OF COMBRA.

FREDRICO, a suitor.

URBANIO, a banished Duke.

BOLERIO, chamberlain to the King.

FERNANDO, }
DOMENICO, } Courtiers.

MERANO, a General in the King's army.

RINALDO.

BASENO, a soldier.

PEDRO.

CAPTAIN OF THE GUARD.

LIEUTENANT, }
SERGEANT, } Of the King's army.
CORPORAL, }

SOLDIER-PHILOSOPHER.

A PAGE.

A PRIEST.

1ST ATTENDANT, }
2D ATTENDANT, } In the King's service.
3D ATTENDANT, }

QUEEN.

PRINCESS CARLOTTA, in love with the Duke of Combra.

CLARISSA, maid in attendance on the Princess.

LADY OF THE COURT.

FLORETTA, }
ROSETTA, } Village girls.
BELLA, }

Ladies of the Court, Soldiers, and Village Girls.

ITALY, SIXTEENTH CENTURY



Act II.



THE DISCONSOLATE MONARCH

ACT I. SCENE I.

An apartment in the King's castle. Enter *Fernando* and
Domenico.

Fernando.

Believe me, sir, till now I heard it not.

Domenico.

Not heard it ! Pray, whither have you been ?
Or have you slept ? that this sad news,
Now common unto all,
Hath thus escaped you.

Fernando.

From the frontier have I just returned,
Where I a courier from the King was sent.
While there was I a witness to a strife
So hot, so bloody, so with fury waged,
That to my awe-filled mind my ears gave place,

Which else had doubtless heard her going hence.
When happened this? When was the Princess missed?

Domenico.

Her custom ever early to arise,
And at the appointed hour went her maid
To give her 'tendance. Vacant her chamber.
Her maid, with unaroused suspicion, sat
Her Highness's return. An hour elapsed;
Fears upon her grew, and in their heat
And fullness she did make the Princess' absence known.
The King, thus sudden taken, swooned and mocked.
The Court Physician's skill,
At length revived, yet scarcely is himself.

Fernando.

The Queen?

Domenico.

Calmly she bore herself, as one who long had
Studied for the part which she therein enacted,
As one, indeed, who having lost a daughter
Heeded not, she had a daughter lost.

Fernando.

Grieves yet the King?

Domenico.

Where love is great,
Great grief doth ever follow the loss of love.
Oh, when or where was daughter so beloved
As she of him! He did adore her,
Moulded ever his life to her life's pleasure,

And as his grief is, so his rage doth run,
O'erpowering opposition.

Fernando.

What man hath done this ?

Domenico.

Villain rather. One of your sweet gallants,
A lord, a foreigner, a sneak in velvet,
A conjurer, one whose practised art
Hath caught her eye in love.

Fernando.

Think you so ?

Domenico.

It must be so. Had she not here a lover,
Countenanced, and led by both their Majesties,
A lover fervent, one who has assailed for many months,
With love, love's citadel, and should ere this have
Carried it, having the means which he in person has,
A form and face to catch and captivate
The eyes of all beholders.

Gentle his disposition,
His words, like prayers, so measuredly do flow
That all who hear them, do upon him look,
As on some holy man.

Indeed, were I a woman
I could not sleep, but I should dream of him,
Nor wake but unto him my thoughts compose,
Deem it a rapture but to look on him,
Each minute lost not in his company spent,
My pleasure ever to hear his voice, and hold it,
To warn with envious eye all others off

That I alone might have it.
No woman's cunning to win his favor
But should be mine. If then his heart respond not,
Then to die would be to me a pleasure,
A pleasure equal to the love I bore,
Yea, even then would bear him.

Fernando.

Mean you Fredrico?

Domenico.

He. Could she have wished a better man
To be to her a husband?

Fernando.

If he have virtues to his graces equal,
As you recount them, then, is this man a saint.

Domenico.

So shine his virtues,
That, know the world no ending,
It can produce no nobler gentleman.

Fernando.

Tush, tush!

Domenico.

Believe it,
I am in human nature deeply versed,
Or have my years unprofitably passed,
Or I to dotage.

Fernando.

Suppose him all you speak him. It avails not—
Love not on beauty looks, but where he loves,

And deems her beautiful beyond compare
Who in all others' eyes is homely called.
This is Love's right, Love's sole prerogative.

Domenico.

All this I know.

Fernando.

Opposed, Love's course grows strong,
And faster yet it flows.

Domenico.

True.

Fernando.

The King himself did worship at Love's shrine,
At Love's dictation married, and o'erbore
Parental precept. Therefore, knows he well
The fallacy of hope.

Domenico.

The King doth come, let us pass on.

Fernando.

Pardon me, this packet must I straight
Deliver him.

Domenico.

Now to approach is now to anger him
Beyond the bounds of anger. Nothing will he speak,
But of the Princess. Come !

Fernando.

I thank you.

[*Exeunt Fernando and Domenico.*

Enter *King* supported, *Queen*, and *Retinue*.]

King.

Let me go. He is best supported who himself supports.
Give me my staff. Let me go I say !
My wrath shall bear me up though sorrow pluck
Strength from my aged form.
What, lives there no man, not one, not even a King,
From misery exempt.

Queen.

Take comfort.

King.

I am upon the rack, thou torturest me ;
Comfort there is none, and cannot be
For such as I. Deign not to notice me.
These halls shall be my kingdom, and I myself
Will King and subject be
Unto myself. More I crave not,
Unless it be the hollow of a cave,
To dwell and die in,
Unseen of mortal eye.
O grief excessive, that doth welcome death,
Such grief is mine, and I do welcome death,
Thou fear-inspiring conqueror, grim and gaunt,
Nature's sure agent, death, receive me now ;
I now am best conditioned, most prepared,
To give thee welcome,

Unheralded come, even as the shock of her departure,
And pass me straight to that oblivious state,
Which here no waking knows.

Queen.

My Lord.

King.

Villain thou, not face to face, but coward like,
Yea, even from behind, dealt thou
Thy murderous blow.

Queen.

Fill him, ye gods, with patience !

King.

Fill me, ye furies, full of direst hate
Against this precious ruffian. If it in aught abate,
Scourge me ! To madness drive me,
All future comfort take from me and mine,
To hell consign me,
Let me not sleep, nor grave my sorrow keep,
Till my revenge be full.

Queen.

You know not what you speak.

King.

I cannot play the hypocrite and smile,
Laugh and be merry, when I feel that within
Which outward proof bears slight
Proportion to.

Queen.

Let us within ourselves our sorrows keep,
Feel, not express them for outer sympathy,
Which the cold world denies
And often mocks.
I have seen a band of romping revellers go by
To merry music,—on one side they,
A funeral at the other, each its own way pursuing,
And when they came together, then, oh, then,
Did they most play, most shout,
And make most merry.

King.

'T is a cold world.

Queen.

And when it alter,
Look thou to see a miracle performed,
Or look for doomsday.

King.

What need you go the round-about of words
To tell us this, which is of all men known.
If you would speak
Let it be of things to us unknown,
That it, or knowledge or amusement give,
Not waste the time with nothing. For we are old,
And age alone doth know,
How swift of foot is time.

Queen.

These humors are unlike you. Be yourself.

King.

Who can his nature alter ?
Who himself transform from that he is ?
Oh, she is fled, and I perforce am fled,
Being of her composed. Who comes ?

Queen.

Fredrico.

Enter *Fredrico*.]

Fredrico.

How fares your gracious Majesties ?

King.

Alas, how fares it with you ?
Whose generous nature, kinsman to mine own,
Needs feels the loss it suffers.

Fredrico.

All, all is darkness.

King.

I pity thee.

Fredrico.

Nature in me her functions so illy holds,
I do nor sleep nor wake, scarce know what 't is I speak,
Or what to speak, that can my sympathy and sorrow
show,
On this occasion sad.

King.

Bear witness Heaven, I never gave her cause,
But did at all times all my acts conform
To her and happiness.

Fredrico.

Oh, true it is,
We in appreciation lack of those rich gifts we have,
Until we lose them.

King.

What mean you ? You loved her much.

Fredrico.

The heart alone, if it could speak,
Could all love's passion pour, in language adequate,
Unequalled though I thought it, yet, oh, much more
Is now my love, than e'er it was before.
Beseech you, pardon me these heavy tears,
That have since morning flowed.

Bolerio.

(Aside to *Pedro*.)

All is not grief that seems so.

Pedro.

(Aside to *Bolerio*.)

An onion at the eyes will water bring.

Bolerio.

(Aside to *Pedro*.)

I do suspect this lover grievously.

King.

If tears speak aught they truly speak thy love,—
Since thou dost weep, then so again will I,
If for no more than for thy company.
I have far greater cause than thou to weep,

Was she not mine, of my own blood begot,—
Kin is no tie against the force of love.

Fredrico.

Love is a mystery.

King.

Oh, that with tears we could our daughter bring
Again to our embrace, then would I weep indeed,
Then would these fountains flow. So copious flow,
That I with tears would all my sorrow drown
And to my bosom clasp my love again.

Queen.

What need of tears,
Have I not said that she will be returned ?

Fredrico.

Oh, that, your Majesty, is music sweet
As ever came to ear.

King.

To me 't is discord, prythee speak no more.
Must I with this delusion gorge myself,
Build with my life immoderate expectation
That, when it fall, falls not itself alone,
But life and all.

Queen.

If it prove not true,
To farming, and to profit turn.
Our high-priced soldiery.

[Enter a *Page*, who delivers a letter to the *Queen*, which she
reads. Exit *Page*.]

(To *Bolevio*.)

My fears, less for Carlotta's safety than our own,
Grow strong. She cannot long escape us, while we,
From rebellion's thralldom never may be free.
What hear you of these miscreants? What new news
impart?
Our fears to quell, and comfort give my heart.

Bolerio.

All news first to your Majesty
Is at once conveyed.

Queen.

Fernando, tardy courier, in thee
Lie all my hopes. What hear you of him?

Bolerio.

Madam, nothing.

Queen.

Nothing, of course.
Come, follow close,
I may have need of thee.

[Exit *Queen*, followed by *Bolerio*.]

Fredrico.

Well, fare you well,
I cannot proffer comfort, feeling none,
And better 't is I from your presence go.

King.

Whither would you?

Fredrico.

Whither my footsteps lead me, I know not whither,
Or east or west, a wanderer till death,
My haunts shall be without the sight of man,
That I alone may with myself commune,
And tax the world with harshness.

King.

I 'll bear thee company.

Fredrico.

Your Majesty ?

King.

I, even I, if thou wilt suffer me ;
Better than youth age oft his burden bears.
If thou hast fear, fear not, I will not trouble thee,
I 'll bravely on, and my own part sustain,
Yea, journey unaided on.

Fredrico.

Though much I would your Majesty would grace,
And ease my steps with loving company,
Yet, must I such a cruel thought forbear,
Viewing thy years and regal quality.

King.

Why speak you thus ? Think you I am infirm ?
Of strength incapable ? One who can endure not
The vicissitudes of travel ? Dispel thy thoughts,
And youth in age look on,
On me, whose vigor does the envy draw
Of men of middle life.

True, I am old, but age a blessing is,
With health and vigor coupled.

Fredrico.

Happy is he who at thy age can show
So sturdy frame.

King.

What wouldst thou do, but I may therein join,
And lose no credit by comparison.
Wouldst walk? Wouldst run?
Wouldst face the winter's storm? the blast tem-
pestuous?
Or hatless brave the rays of summer's sun?
Or hunger feel? or bedless seek thy rest?
The turf thy pillow? Heaven thy canopy?
Or wouldst thou face a greater peril still,
As in some wilderness to luckless roam?
A prey to beasts and vile necessity.
If thou wouldst these, or any danger dare,
Why, so would I, and therein comfort find,
Denied me here in this extremity.

Fredrico.

Couldst thou all this endure?

King.

What can he not endure,
Who has endured
The sudden losing of a daughter loved.

Fredrico.

But do not of this matter further think,

Lest further thinking fix it in your mind,
And firmly root it there. This is thy kingdom —

King.

Say rather my kingly care.

Fredrico.

And may your Majesty long live to wear
The jewelled emblem of authority.

King.

Mean you my crown ?

Go fetch it, boy, that we may on it look [Exit Page.
And of its worth give true significance.
To me it did an heritage descend,
Borne on the brows of many monarchs dead.
Brief were the reigns of some, of others long,
Would some had died, ere they their reigns begun.
If with our lives, our wicked acts could die,
And lie disturbed not in the silent tomb,
Oppression base, and heart-wrung agony,
From the quick gaze and hearing of the world
Would then be hid, and they succeeding,
All the happier feel,
With knowledge only of our better deeds.

Fredrico.

Would it were so.

King.

The crown I sought not; never did wish it mine,
Nor want it now, though I have worn it long ;
They most do power wish who most it lack,

As 't were, indeed, a virtue Heaven born.
Oh, if it were, would men for power strive,
And vex their souls with purpose to attain it,
Or would they not, as they most virtues do,
Pass it unheeded by?

Fredrico.

Most true.

Enter *Page*, bearing crown on a cushion.]

King.

What shall it stead me, dead, and passed away,
To fill a page in kingly history,
To have it thereon writ that I was born,
On such or such a day. On such or such a day
My reign began, and then to chronicle
My date of death—and this is all—
Where is my crown that late I bade thee bring?

Page.

'T is here, your Majesty.

King.

My crown, God's mercy, here I lay it down,
Let him who wants it wear it. (Places crown
It is but as a flinty, unkept road, on the floor.)
And I, the wearer, journeying thereon,
A traveller unshod.

Enter *Queen* and *Bolerio*.]

Queen.

Take up the crown, and bear it safely hence,
Against all further folly.

O sir, you well acquit yourself.
Know you not the dignity of royalty demands,
A more enlarged respect than now you give it.

King.

The dignity of royalty, forsooth,
What 's royalty, now every man is royal.
What man so low but he his fellow tops,
And of his fellow that observance seeks,
Which he to him denies.

Fredrico.

Greatness grows cheap
When every man grows great. Come good report,
I 'll be in person near, to give it greeting ;
If not, farewell, a final, sad, affectionate
Farewell.

(Embraces the *King*.)

King.

I 'll to my chamber,
There, with myself commune.

[Exit.

Fredrico.

(Aside, near exit.)

I court thy favors, Fortune, wilt thou come ?
If not, I care not, Fortune, I despise thee !

[Exit.

Queen.

(To *Bolerio*.)

Go, attend the King.

[Exit *Bolerio*.

So is ill fortune by ill fortune followed,
That once we meet it, scarce a question 't is,
It will o'erwhelm or end us.
The last the worst, a stroke, and more severe,
Never did fortune to a nation give.
'T is now rebellion's turn, and now it comes,
Yea, come it is, with monster head upraised,
And serpent like, its fangs outstretching far,
Its hideous hisses fill the ambient air,
And fill mine ears, and fill my mind with fear.
Why should I fear, who never yet did fear
Or man or woman born. Yet, yet, I fear,
This horde rebellious, lacking check, might run
Our kingdom o'er, and dire destruction bring.
But where 's Fernando, oh, where is he,
Who some days since we to the army sent.
Hath he returned not? And hath no news come?

Domenico.

No news, your Majesty.

Queen.

Ill news flies fast 't is said, which, if it be true,
Then, must this tardy messenger bring cheer
Our doubts to kill, and banish quite our fear.

Domenico.

Now spoke of, now he comes.

Enter *Fernando*.]

Queen.

What news? What news, Fernando?

Fernando.

The news I bring, herein in full 't is written.
Receive, I pray, this packet, which done,
Is my commission ended.

Queen.

Bear it within, that preparation—if preparation must—
May quickly following reading. Stay, take it, thou.
Is it or ill or good news? Do not speak,
Or if you speak, say not thy news is ill.
What foolish questioning it is I have !
If ill 't is ill, words cannot alter it.
Suspected ills our fears do magnify
To large proportions, baseless oft they are,
Or at the worst, being known, the worst is o'er.
Speak !

Fernando.

Grant me leave my loyalty to show,
By kissing first the hand of Majesty.

Queen.

This for thyself, canst thou for others speak
So much of fealty, who should as bulwarks
This, our throne, surround, not seek with actions
riotous
To o'erthrow that which was precious to them.

Fernando.

Men's lives to men most precious
Are by this rebel horde so lightly held,
That they their lives surrender willingly
In onslaught fierce against the soldiery.

Queen.

Death be the end of all
Who stake their lives 'gainst that of sovereignty.
What, are they all dispersed ?

Fernando.

I did but speak to prove their bravery,
Which, like a wall unflinchingly withstood
The bullets showered on them—
Fast they fell,
And strewed the ground with groaning
Bodies o'er.

Queen.

Good, good, I say! What more ?

Fernando.

Undaunted still,
Still did they close and once again renew
Their oft repulsed attack.
O'ercome at last by numbers powerful,
Broke we our ranks and ran.

Queen.

We! Who ?

Fernando.

Unchecked, uncheckable, all arms abandoned,
Horse, foot, and all, in one mixed body sped,
Nor ceased, till we our safety had secured
By distance placed, far from the enemy.

Queen.

Speak what thou canst,
Thou canst not me amaze,

More than thou hast already.
Oh, act of cowardice,
How basely dost thou in a soldier show,
When children charged therewith do blush for shame,
And strongly press denial.
Oh, who his hearing can so perfect have,
But he may doubt of it.
My ears, susceptible to fear, convert
All they do hear to fear.
Said you our soldiers ran ?

Fernando.

I would I could as truthfully deny
What I with truth have spoken.

Queen.

Some evil spirit doth hover hereabout,
And vents his venom on us.
Soldiers and run, whose happy privilege it is to die,
To die to uphold the glorious name of soldier.
Pursued these miscreants far ?

Fernando.

To Borona,
Which must hereafter in our memories live,
And the sorrowing minds of those who
Dwelt there.

Queen.

Burnt they the village ?

Fernando.

Churches and all.

Queen.

God's vengeance be upon them.
Whence sprang this turmoil ?
Know you yet the cause ?

Fernando.

From so slight cause, till now, rebellion came not.
Two citizens in altercation meet,
Whose heated words to heavy blows succumb,
A common sight, and lightly thought upon.
The source alone, whence this rebellion sprung,
Strange it appears, and yet 't is true as strange
That single combat still itself maintains,
In this, the present, struggle. Oh, thus it was :
The friends of each, a numerous throng, appear,
Hot as their principals, and therein engage.

Queen.

The wise to human brawls are ever blind.

Fernando.

Not so thought they, those many citizens,
Who then and there did eagerly attempt
The maddened mob to quell.
Vain were their efforts. Furiously assailed,
They blow for blow exchange, and soon become
In the dense mob incorporate.
A surging mass the street its limit fills
Of struggling humanity.
The loud-mouthed bells do now their clamor vent,
And sleeping citizens in fear awake.
Possessed with dread, scarce of their clothes possessed,
Fast to the street they run ;

A human current meets them, in which
They are themselves dissolved.

Queen.

Came not the officers? Oh, where were they?

Fernando.

Oh, when did justice save on crutches come.
The tardy officers at length approach,
In numbers strong, with stately mien they come,
Their presence known, much wonder they to see,
The mob defiant still. I will be brief,
Success, success attends. Justice is routed,
And the masses join the mob victorious,
Now more rampant grown.

Queen.

What beast, if capable, would act like man,
Proud man, with reason blessed.

Fernando.

Oh, more to speak were still in tones unchangeable
To speak. To speak success unbroken,
Violence committed, Justice herself defied,
Dethroned, and trampled on.

Queen.

It is enough,
Too much could less have done.
With death, let cowardice like treason meet,
For so it shall, while yet we hold our crown
And of our realm retain authority.
Who of our generals led?

Fernando.

The gallant Merano.

Queen.

Gallant, ungallant, Merano, lead no more,
No more of ours be thou an officer.
Forthwith we will our royal court convene,
Whose searching inquiry will doubtless be
To thee a coward's doom.

Fernando.

(Aside.)

How brief to man is fame,
Whose giddy height, and treacherous footing, fall,
Its bearer to the ground.
Oh, so to die, 't is pitiful.
He ne'er for valor ever met reproof.
Till came this late disaster to destroy,
And all at once, his fair fame's history.

Queen.

It steads him not his record past is good,
For we must to ourselves some mercy show
And to our subjects all.
Call you it mercy that does one life spare,
With peril to the many? No.
Mercy best is shown when we with mercy
Most of good perform unto the many.
'T is not the past, man's present acts we view
And thereby judge of man.
We look not upward for the great who fall,
But where they fall, and as they fall,
So we our judgment form.
Note you my meaning?

Fernando.

Right well.

Queen.

Sweet fruit to sour turned is cast away,
Esteemed alone while sweet.
Is it yet plain?

Fernando.

Very plain.

Queen.

Or say I have a statue, whose high art
All but perfection is. Myself an adept,
I love, nay, I adore it. It falls, 't is broken,
What follows then? I cannot then
Upon the fragments look — which bear
No semblance to the form it was — as on the statue.
In brief, the unrelenting code of war demands
That he to judgment come.

Fernando.

So please you —

Queen.

No more. Give order straight our council be convened,
And he a prisoner before it brought
To instant trial. [Exit *Fernando*.
Great men by great occasions are brought forth,
Many who to their neighbors scarce were known
Have by their force of genius—the occasion favoring—
In one full bound fame's highest summit reached,
And filled the world with wonder.

'T is so no more, and man in semblance only
Is a man, of what he was.

I look about me—

Here 's a goodly company of glittering incapacity,
And even as they are, of such is our realm composed ;
By tailors made, they their tailors owe
For what they are,
Till brains be furnished easily as backs
I shall in them see no capacity.

Enter <i>King</i>	Weep, weep, my Lord,
and <i>Bolerio</i> .]	Now hast thou cause,
	Till now, no cause to weep.

King.

Alas, she 's dead !

Queen.

Dead let her be to grief and memory,
She lives.

King.

Then all is well.

Queen.

All is not well when grows our kingdom ill.
Rebellion's reign threatens our own.
'T is like the ungovernable and mighty flood,
Which, breaking forth its confines, overwhelms
All that before it comes.

King.

What, would they all be kings ?
Who now is satisfied ? Who with his lot content ?
By nature fitted each his part to play,

Proud man, usurping nature, seeks to fill
A rôle to him unsuited.
Some would be kings, the diadem to wear,
Who, to a king, as much relation bear
As I to happiness.
What slave but in his mind a prince could be,
Or add new lustre to the name of duke?
Thus each and all, of high or low degree,
By false ambition prompted, onward strive,
Nor oft attain their object, nor receive
Whate'er of comfort to their lot belongs.

Bolerio.

(To *Queen*.)

'T is even so, your Majesty.

In life as on the stage,
If we assume a part to us unsuited,
We add to our discomfiture, and draw
The laugh of the world upon us.

Queen.

This you speak is nothing.

King.

All that is, is nothing.

Queen.

I 'll to the council,
Comfort meanwhile be with you.

[Exit *Queen*.]

Enter *1st Attendant*.]

1st Attendant.

Soldiers just returned
Do bring no news.

King.

Of what, Sirrah ?

1st Attendant.

The Princess, your Majesty.

King.

Despatch them hence again in further quest,
And bother me no more with news of nothing.

[Exit Attendant.]

Oh, can it be that what we call our pleasures
Oft are sent to curse and plague us ?
Wherefore else did Heaven send her me,
If not to punish me ?
Let all depart, I fain would be alone.
Bolerio ?

[Exeunt Suite.]

Bolerio.

Here, my liege.

King.

Whither would you ?

Bolerio.

Did you not bid me even now depart ?

King.

Bid thee depart ?

No! Thy comfort and thy counsel, dear, my friend,
Have been as balm unto my wounded spirits,
Which, else, had doubtless died.

Bolerio.

Long live you to receive and I to give.

King.

Despair my bosom sits.

Think you, in truth, our daughter will return ?

Bolerio.

Let not fair hope to foul despair give way,
For hope once lost, nothing is left us here.
Hope is a friend, long tried, and ever true,
A bright star fixed, hope guides us dangers through.
The shipwrecked mariner, of hope deprived,
Himself would drown; clinging thereto, survives,
And sees afar his rescue slow approach.

King.

Hope is a staff whereon all fools do lean,
Even unto the grave, there breaking,
They both fall in, and both are buried there.
No, bid me not be of hope,—
Add woe to woe, for therein comfort is,
Comfort 's alone in woe.
Or if thou shouldst, by Heaven and earth I swear,
I 'll tear my love from out my bosom here,
And be to thee thenceforth thy deadliest enemy.

Bolerio.

I 'll never bid you be of comfort more.

King.

Give me thy hand and pardon ;
Passion and grief combining make me blind,
Even to the love and duty due my friend,
For such thou art, and therefore heed it not.
A threat in passion vented

Is like hot iron into water plunged,
A sound, and then an ending.

Bolerio.

Harsh words in friendly ears are heeded not.

King.

A friend may to a friend his anguish speak,
Though 't is expressed in anger, and still retain
Each unto other a friendship unimpaired.
Is it not so ?

Bolerio.

It is.

King.

In speech alone can I some comfort find.
Words are the vents, out which much sorrow flows,
Relieving the o'erburdened heart.
Bear with me, I am tedious, that I know;
Old men are tedious, halting many words.
Reply not you, if silence you prefer,
Only be you near, 't is something I do know
That you are near.

Bolerio.

Thy words, as no man's else, love I to hear.

King.

A duke saidst thou he is ?

Bolerio.

'T is so said.

King.

The devil duke him.
May all the horrible torments of the damned
Be on him multiplied.
Thou know'st not whence he came ?

Bolerio.

No, your Majesty.

Enter 1st Attendant.]

King.

(Seizing him.)

Hell's fury on thee,
Com'st thou again to vex my soul with nothing !
What wouldst thou, thou trembling
Booby thou ?
" Another troop has just come in and brings no news."
I 'll speak it for thee! *(Beats him.)*
Hence, quit my sight, *[Exit Attendant.]*
I care not if I never see thee more !
Did'st give the order as I directed ?

Bolerio.

I did.

King.

And went they southward too ?

Bolerio.

Southward and toward the Western forest.

King.

Let watchers in the tower vigil keep,

That her perceiving, merrily may ring
The castle bells, foretelling her approach.

Bolerio.

'T is ordered done.

King.

Fain would I know her coming ere she do come.
But here my Queen comes, looking sternly sad.
What bring'st thou of good or ill report?

Enter *Queen*, numerously attended.]

Queen.

Our worst of fears are in their worst confirmed.

King.

I of Carlotta speak. Speak you of her?

Queen.

Of aught but her.

King.

What need you voice it with so loud a tongue,
I am not deaf.

Queen.

To the tower with her.

King.

Harsh means make harsh where gentle means prevail.
A forced obedience, through fear inspired,
Is not obedience, such as I desire
Should be my daughter's.

Queen.

To the tower with her still.

King.

Filial affection will not so far stray,
Ere it again the path of duty find,
If Kindness call and Love do lead the way.

Queen.

Would she were back, and in the tower cast,
There to repent at leisure.

King.

Look, where like vultures my attendants stand
And feast their eyes upon me.
Even so, methinks, the ravenous bird
Gloats o'er his hapless prey, and awaits
Its final gasp, to pounce upon and rend it.
Company let us be unto ourselves. Leave us.

Queen.

Go not, nor note him.
His grief and not his nature makes him thus,
Who, else, had been most kind.

King.

O, Misery of the world, which not endures
The sight of friendly eye! [Enter *Baseno*.
Thy face thy tale discloses. What dost thou bring?

Baseno.

A clue, which happily pursued
May lead to capture.

King.

Speak!

Baseno.

An aged villager, ere crow of cock,
As was his custom, to the forest went
To gather fagots. Thus employed,
Two figures passed before him,
One in a long cloak arrayed.
Nothing they spoke but quickly walked away,
As they would not be seen.

King.

Saw not he their faces?
The moon was up, was it not?

Baseno.

Affrighted, homeward hastened he his way,
Like one pursued. To vouch his story,
There his fagots lay, and may of all be seen.

King.

This is the brightest news that yet I 've heard,
All but Bolerio go.

Spur sides and onward like the furious blast
Blown by rude Boreas in his maddest hour,
Go, like demons go, or thieves pursued.

[Exeunt.]

Bolerio, my famished hopes centre in you
For succor and success. No hireling you,
Whose work 's his pay. Duty in you is love.
Oh, what you do is with your utmost done
To please and serve us.

Bolerio.

What would I not to serve you!

King.

In this important business,
There 's not a man of them whom I could trust,
With surety of success. Only to you I look,
As one whose face would bear opinion out,
And come in triumph home.
Start not, nor think I flatter,
For what I speak is born of my belief
As truly as I speak it.
Opportunity, which comes but seldom in the life of man,
Is yours : Is yours the power to grasp it,
Making it the means to thine own honor.
It is the ladder whereupon the great
To greatness climb. How say you ?

Bolerio.

What I can I will to serve you.

King.

My ring shall warrant you in all you do.
Take it, and pursue your journey westward,
Even to the forest, where 't is thought
Our daughter is concealed.
When you shall reach it, of my forces take
Supreme command. Dispose them to advantage.
The outskirts guard. Soldiers place within
At regular intervals. Traverse it,
Leave no place unsearched
Where mortal foot may rest,
Then when you come, you may come a man, indeed,
And high in honor home.

Bolerio.

Method shall guide, and fortune favor me,
I hope, in this fair undertaking.

[Exit.

King.

The Western forest, 't is a tract, indeed,
Of vast extent, close wooded, mountainous,
With thickets tangled, deep defiles, and pitfalls;
Huge oaks, storm-strewn and twisted,
Intercept the way, and look like giants fallen.
Birds and beasts of prey therein abound;
The distant dismal howl of ravenous wolf
By wolf is answered, and sounds the forest through,
Making life hideous.

The night-belated traveller pursues
With quickened pace his anxious, weary way,
Oft stops and listens, frightened by the sound
Of his own steps. Looks while he runs,
Like one who fears a ghost, nor deems him safe
Until, the limit of the forest passed,
He stops for breath.

Queen.

'T is a place by night to be avoided— (Bell rings.)
The midnight bell the solemn stillness breaks,
Giving assurance of the hours gone.
Now all again is hushed.
Will you to bed, my Lord ?

King.

Will I dance or sing ? I marvel at thy words.

Queen.

Dark deeds become the dark.
The robber now, and those on evil bent,
From their concealment steal, and take to the road,
To plunder and to prey.
Besotted creatures, whose tavern 's their delight,
The ditch their bed, are at this hour abroad,
And staggering homeward.
Songs and sounds discordant mark their way,
And brawls incessant.
Loud over all is heard the watch dog's bark,
And now sweet slumbering Innocence awakes,
And fears impending danger, buries his head,
And loses himself anew.
All mortals wise their weary senses rest
In healthful slumber, and wake
To strength renewed.
Shall we this recreative agent still refuse,
And longer keep from rest ?
Come, my Lord, come!

King.

Whence is that dreadful cry ?

Queen.

It is the screech of owl,—
Nightly, this fortnight, hath he come and sit
Beneath our chamber window,
And startled me from sleep.

King.

I heard it not.

Queen.

Soundly you slept and stirred not.

King.

Oh, never shall I more such slumber feel
As then was mine. Never shall feel it more.
Henceforth I must with cankering sorrow lie
The long night thro', count as I lie,
The slowly moving minutes, and pray for day,
Or should I doze, it would but be to dream
Of hideous things, to cry aloud, to leap from bed,
To clutch at fantasy.
Happy is he who free from care reclines
The downy couch of sweet content, and draws
The influence benign of that dear God
Who does our slumbers keep.

Queen.

Come, come !

[Exeunt hand in hand.]



Act III.



ACT II. SCENE I.

An apartment in the castle. Several *Attendants* in earnest conversation.

1st Attendant.

Service call you it? Service, indeed, his Majesty's service.

One may as well think of flying as please him.

All.

We cannot please him.

1st Attendant.

Not Beelzebub himself could approach him in violence.

All.

True, true.

1st Attendant.

Oh, my poor back! Look you, place your hand on my shoulder, there, ay, there; tell me now what dost thou feel there?

2d Attendant.

Why, truly, thy shoulder.

1st Attendant.

I know that, but tell me, dost thou feel a lump say as large as a hen's egg or larger?

2d Attendant.

Truly I do not.

1st Attendant.

'T is within, then, for I feel it. The devil is no match for him as a maker of lumps.

Enter *Clarissa*.]

Clarissa.

Well, now, what 's the matter now?

1st Attendant.

Matter enough is it, as my poor back can testify to. I would it had a tongue that it might speak for itself.

Clarissa.

A cuff from a King is better than gold from any man. Is it not an honor?

1st Attendant.

Is it? 'T is cheap honor then; it goes a-kicking.

2d Attendant.

By your leave, lady, I 'll take gold.

Clarissa.

I pity thy narrow judgment. Every man may have gold,—that can get it,—but the disfavor of the King is an honor vouchsafed only to the few.

1st Attendant.

They are welcome to it.

All.

Ay, they are welcome to it.

Clarissa.

Is it for the King's ears you keep this clatter up?
If so I pity you.

1st Attendant.

Thou shouldst pity my poor back that aches me
almost to madness.

Clarissa.

Why did you come in his way?

1st Attendant.

Faith, I came not in his way, and there's the trouble,
for says he, "look at that rogue who seeks to avoid
me," then dealt he such blows on my back that, O,
Lord, I shall never get over them.

3d Attendant.

If he come a-near me, I'll take no risk.

1st Attendant.

Why, what wouldst thou do?

3d Attendant.

I'll jump the window.

2d Attendant.

What, and be killed, man?

3d Attendant.

'T is best for safety.

Clarissa.

Our troubles are even as we ourselves do make them; given not so much of one's mind, they do not seem to be so heavy as they are.

1st Attendant.

I do not well understand that.

Clarissa.

I say give the matter not so much of your mind.

1st Attendant.

If I give it not my own mind, whose mind shall I give it then?

Clarissa.

No man's.

1st Attendant.

No man's, in truth, nor woman's neither, for they have no minds but for themselves.

Clarissa.

Mean you to say there is no sympathy in the world?

1st Attendant.

Sympathy, I warrant you, more oft expressed than felt; but sympathy heals not a bruised back; 't is not so good as liniment, yet, 't is something, 't is words, and words are something.

Clarissa.

Well, let it go at that.

1st Attendant.

I would my back would.

Clarissa.

'T is best you go within, lest your absence prove to your disadvantage.

1st Attendant.

What, and be again beaten!

All.

We will not; we will not.

Clarissa.

As you please, but as you will not to the King, look where the King comes to you.

Attendants.

Save us, save us !

(Running off.)

Clarissa.

Ha, ha, ha! I did never see such frightened rascals. Name but King to them, and they are off like a pack of hounds at full cry.

Enter *Baseno*.]

What, you here, Baseno !

Baseno.

To please thee, sweetheart.

Clarissa.

To please thyself. Were you not with the soldiers ordered out in search of the Princess?

Baseno.

Thou art the only Princess worthy my search.

Clarissa.

If this be known, thou art like to be shot for it.

Baseno.

Shot!

Clarissa.

Ay, or hanged.

Baseno.

Mercy me, how think'st thou I should look on the gallows?

Clarissa.

Why, even as they looked who were hanged before thee.

Baseno.

I think thou lov'st me not.

Clarissa.

Thou canst be sworn to that.

Baseno.

That thou lov'st me not?

Clarissa.

Ay.

Baseno.

Have I not proven my love ?

Clarissa.

Thou has followed me about the castle
Day in and day out, like mine own shadow.
If that be love thou art full of it.

Baseno.

Have I not bent my knee to thee,
I know not how oft ?

Clarissa.

Well, what of that ? Any fool may do that, that
hath knees to bend.

Baseno.

But would any fool do it ?

Clarissa.

Yes, would he, and wise men too,
If I would let them.

Baseno.

Not if I should know it.

Clarissa.

Why, what wouldst thou do ?

Baseno.

No matter, I am not all fool.
I know something.

Clarissa.

Thou know'st how to break the King's commandment and come here in search of me, instead of the Princess, for whose absence the King is grievous ill and out of humor.

Baseno.

The King is but the King, thou art an angel.
Once more I bend the knee, once more protest my
heart's true love for thee.

Clarissa.

True love, ha, ha, ha !
True love till you get us, and having us,
Of what quality would be your love then ?

Baseno.

What shall I say to prove my love to thee ?

Clarissa.

Say nothing, get thee gone !
Thou ne'er shalt have my love.

Baseno.

Heaven send thee a better lover.

Clarissa.

Heaven send thee better sense, Baseno.
Come now, if thou lov'st me as thou saidst,
What wouldst thou do for me ?

Baseno.

What would I not do for thee.

Clarissa.

Let me see. Thou wouldst not die for me?

Baseno.

In good truth, I would not die for thee.

Clarissa.

And why not? True lovers ever willing are to die for those they love.

Baseno.

Why, being dead, thou couldst not have my love.

Clarissa.

I will promise to love thee on one condition.

Baseno.

Quickly let me know it.

Clarissa.

It is that thou go, and immediately drown thyself.

Ha, ha, ha! 'T is the only chance thou wilt ever have to make a name for thyself.

Baseno.

Woman's love may be measured by the gifts

One gives her, the greater the gift, the greater her love.

Clarissa.

(Striking him.)

That for thy slander — and that — and that —

Thou knave detestable. Is it thus you speak?

Think'st thou the heaven-born love of woman
 May as commodities be bought and sold
 With paltry presents, and palm-itching pelf?
 With thee, and with thy love, I now am done.

Baseno.

It were all one no matter what I speak,
 For look you, if I make my honest conviction known,
 Therefore, am I censured, and if I speak not
 My true mind, I am censured no less—
 Truly, in my case,
 Censure is a weapon that cuts each way,
 Wounding both friend and foe.

Clarissa.

Heaven restore thee thy wits, for thou art
 In sore need—thou art the one man deficient—
 Learn wisdom with thy years, thy love bestow,
 Where love may be requited.

Baseno.

I will do so—
 I will make love even to a stone
 Whose heart in feeling warmer is than thine,
 Ere I again my heart's true love make known
 To thee, who hast no liking to be loved.

(Each going off slowly in opposite directions.)

Clarissa.

Baseno, wilt thou kiss me?

Baseno. (Running toward her.)

Ay, will I,

Clarissa. (Laughing and running off.)

Thou art the veriest fool.

SCENE 2.

A forest. The *Duke* emerges from the hollow of an old oak.

Duke.

Thou good old friend,
Within thy centre, safe as under ground,
Have I concealment found.
Hush, what noise was that!
I almost fear to breathe lest some accursed soldier,
Lurking near, should catch the sound, and draw me
 into combat.
Oh, me, most miserable!
To have all but have had her, and to have lost her thus!
No, No!
I'll not bemoan, and call on fortune to amend my fate,
As many another has, but take her cuffs for kindness.
There is no situation so severe but man may profit
By it, and become a man more wise and happy—
So I shall out of this some comfort take,
Which now I see not. I hear voices.

(The *Duke* conceals himself in the hollow of the oak. Enter
Sergeant, Corporal, and Soldiers.)

Sergeant.

Said you, you saw him run this way ?

Corporal.

'T was this way, I'm sure.

Sergeant.

If you meet with him, level not your piece,
But take him living.

Corporal.

What, if he won't surrender ?

Sergeant.

If he show fight or seek to run away,
Your gun must answer it.
Stand there, ho, who comes ?

Enter *Baseno*.]

Baseno.

'T is I, *Baseno*.

Corporal.

What luck, *Baseno* ?

Baseno.

The game, I fear, hath fled.

Sergeant.

I fear so too.

'T is something but to know the Princess captured.

Corporal.

So would it be had we have taken her.

Sergeant.

You in her capture, as I hear, took part.

Baseno.

This puncture in my cloak more bravely speaks
My part therein than I with words.
Briefly thus it was.

Fruitless our three days' search,
Broke we our party up, and each pursued
Singly his way, according to his bent.

I, then alone, did with Bolerio meet
And soldiers two. No soldier he,
But only a man and good, and as it chanced,
Straight on the Duke he came,
Who with the Princess in the forest walked
As villagers disguised.

Thus attired,
He, unsuspected, had unnoticed been,
But that with undue haste his sword he draws
And drives at Matteo, wounds him,
And o'erbears, assistance newly come.
No demon in his fury e'er so fought
'Gainst odds so heavy.
At length by nightfall aided, turned and ran,
Gained on his hot pursuit, and disappeared.
Then bore Bolerio the Princess off
To receive the credit which to us belongs.

Corporal.

Dumb luck doth win where great skill
Often fails.

Sergeant.

'T is now so dark it will avail us nothing
To remain longer. Return we to the castle,
And when the day break, continue further search.

SCENE 3.

An apartment in the castle. Enter *King* and *Queen* numer-
ously attended.

King.

Console me not. I will not be consoled.
What is the hour ?

Queen.

The bell hath struck, my Lord.

King.

Is it so early ?

Queen.

So late, my Lord.

King.

How grievous heavy hangs the passing time
On him who would the time would quickly pass!
'T is like a heavy winter garment worn
Under the fierce rays of an August sun.
Well, get you all to rest. Here Sorrow and I will sit,
Sad watchers until morn.
Stay, stir not! I do revoke the order.
All return.

Queen.

Oh, careful should she be—should woman be—
Whose every trivial and most innocent act
Is by the tongue of scandal taken up
And scattered to the winds,
As it were something heinous!

King.

My mind is on her fixed, not on the deed.

Queen.

So we honor keep, let all else go.

King.

A sin atoned is as no sin committed.

Queen.

Oh, that that were so!

Who can the ladder of reputation climb
That once hath fallen it?
What after act of virtue can efface
Remembrance of a guilty action done? None.
Repented, pardoned, forgiven, not forgotten,
It lives, and, ghost-like, haunts our every view,
Avoid it how we may.

King.

Let the world talk,
A proneness natural unto the world,
And draw its slanderous and wagging tongue
On whom it will, me it affects not.
Were we to study but to please the world,
We should but live as fools, and die
Missing the mark we aimed at.

But this is from the current of my thoughts;
Grief my bosom rends,
And soon must terminate my mortal state,
I know it, for I feel it.
An angel whispers me my end is near,
The happy end, when shall my soul
Its flight to heaven wing,
And live in peace eternal.

Queen.

We can more easily a mountain lift
With corporal strength unaided,
Than turn our fate;
And you but injure nature thus to be
A servitor to sorrow. Let youth and folly mourn,

Age by experience is better taught, and takes
The frowns of fortune kindly.
Call up philosophy, that balm serene
To care perturbed minds.
Thou act'st as thou had'st lost thy kingdom.

King.

In all things am I naught but natural—
Go. Go my kingdom, vanish thou in air,
And be a thing that was, what care I for
A kingdom think you now?

Why should I wear a crown
And rule a State, that am not able more
To rule myself? Oh, what 's a kingdom
To man's peace of mind!

Domenico.

Take pity on thy years.

King.

The grief that weeps not
Breaks the heart that bears it.
Let me give vent to grief, lest my sad heart,
Too full to hold my grief, break too.

Queen.

Many for greater cause would not grieve thus,
Would smile and lighten sorrow.

King.

Hold, hold for mercy!
Know you what you speak?
There is no medium to a woman's tongue,

It does from one extreme to the other go,
Converts to joy or anger.

Queen.

My words and motives both are misconstrued
To suit your purpose.

King.

Your words the whetstone to my anger are,
And sharpen it past bearing.
Hear you just Heaven,
“ Would smile and lighten sorrow.”
Who can, such grief concealing, sweetly smile,
Must be at heart a villain base,
Too heinous black for hell.

Queen.

Peace, Peace!

King.

To heaven peace, where peace alone doth dwell,
Here is no peace, no known tranquillity.
Would you have peace, you must above abide,
And be a cherub 'mongst the cherubim.
I will outroar the tempest, yea, so roar,
That all the world, affrighted, shall it hear,
And deem indeed the day of judgment come.
Vain boast, alas,
I can no more than other wretches can,
Nay, not so much, and yet a King,
A King, thou petty thing, caged in life's cage,
The world, thy burdens o'er, whatever thy ambition,
Canst thou more than cold distinction have,

The pomp and pageantry of kingly burial,
Then, like thy subjects, mingle with the dust,
Whereof is mortal made?

Queen.

I 'll retire, nor longer be thy auditor.

[Exit.

King.

Doomed let him be; to feel what I have felt,
'T is punishment enough; if he survive,
I ne'er shall hope for mercy—
Ha, what is this, my brain grows dizzy,
And mine eyes—God's gifts—do lose their
Sense of action. Give me a chair.

Domenico.

Help, help, ho, help !

Queen.

Enters hastily.]

Help, help, help!

King.

Drink, drink !

Queen.

How feel you now, my Lord ?

King.

Why, even as before; 't is nothing.

Queen.

You lack, of all things, strength-restoring sleep.

King.

Sleep, who speaks of sleep ?

That precious boon, of sweet contentment born—
By labor bred—the beggar's helpmate
And the poor man's friend,
All, all shall sleep, save I.

Enter *Pedro*.]

Queen.

Thy news, haste thee to tell it.

Pedro.

Reports new come.
Change not the visage and the front of war
From what they were, but rather make
Them worse.
Tampera now has with
The rebels joined.

Queen.

Great wounds grow less when greater wounds do come.
Convene at once my Council.

[Exit *Pedro*.]

I'll thither straight. Were I a man,
I would myself against these rebels lead,
Die, or be rid of them.

[Exit *Queen*.]

King.

Tell me and truly, think'st thou, indeed,
I shall again our beauteous daughter see,
Caress with finger light her tresses fair,
Court her sweet smile, listen her voice divine,
Enfold once more her precious form to mine,
And press her lips, sealing my heart's devotion
With a kiss?

Domenico.

Do not doubt it.

King.

Give me some wine,
And let sweet music o'er my senses steal,
That it may mock me, and make
My greatest of grief, to me, the greater feel.

(The bell rings ; *King* throws goblet away.)

Do I really hear ? or am I falsely played
By these mine ears, which never yet deceived me ?

Domenico.

Doubt not your hearing still, which thus transmits
The happy, longed-for token.

King.

Oh, news too good to be at once believed !
Run some of you and verify the belief
That she be truly come.

Domenico.

Look where in haste Rinaldo comes
To make it known.

Rinaldo.

She comes ; the Princess is returned ;
The lover did escape them.

King.

Oh, then I fear our fever is not cured,
But will again break out.
Hereafter to annoy us.
Who of them all did our dear daughter bring ?

Rinaldo.

Bolerio, so please you.

King.

Well paid shall be his efforts. She comes.

Enter *Carlotta*, *Bolerio*, and others. She and the *King* advance hastily toward each other and embrace.]

God's blessing and my benison be thine
A thousand-fold. Where hast thou from
Thy poor old father been ?

Enter *Queen*. She advances hastily to *Carlotta*.]

Queen.

Thou giddy, mad - brained, and undaughter - like
daughter,
Who let'st thy folly carry thy sense away to deeds un-
heard of,
Unheard of in a Princess, what wouldst thou do ?
What wouldst do I say ? Dost scorn my words ?
Thou turn'st thy face away.

Carlotta.

Shall a Princess ne'er marry ?

Queen.

Marry, marry ! You talk to marry,
Who know not yet the meaning of the word !
Hark you, Miss Disobedience,
To marry is to be, as custom makes it, a slave
To him you marry. Oh, most rare innocence,
Each man's a saint. The world a mammoth pleasure.

Bolerio.

(Aside.)

I am right glad my daughters are all sons.

Carlotta.

What is the Duke that you should like him not ?
What hath he said ? What done ?
What know you of his person, his estate,
His all, that suits not him to be my husband ?

Bolerio.

(To *Queen.*)

Marriage alone can cure love such as this.

Queen.

Love ! 't is madness, very madness.
A binding proof.

King.

Many and many a night
Have I with sleepless eyes my pillow lain,
Thinking of thee, and what were good for thee.
For I have ever loved thee, and did fear
Some illness or some accident might befall thee,
Such as to youth oft comes.
Have ever prayed that thou might'st grow in honor,
As in years, to emulous womanhood.
Thy youth did promise it, but this thy waywardness
Doth task it so, that I am lost in knowing what to
think.

Queen.

Oh, that nature had but seasoned youth
With some few grains of sense,
Which lacking, makes him now
The scorn of age.

Bolerio.

(Aside.)

As the sapling to the tree
So shows the boy, the man.

Carlotta.

Love is no sin, or I do much mistake,
Or if it be, then I do sin 'gainst you in loving you,
Or better still, in loving Him who made me,
Who bade all love all.

King.

Good words are good, but better good deeds done.

Bolerio.

(Aside.)

O Love, O Lunacy !

King.

Love born of wealth lives short and dies unhappy,
But true love is a rock which ever stands
The winds and billows of adversity.
Where love is not, no happiness can be.

Carlotta.

My life upon his honesty.

Queen.

Blush, blush for shame of thy doings,
For so thou wouldst if thou did'st have shame
In thee. Canst thou but in men's faces beauty see ?
Hath home no ties to bind thee ? Where am I ?
A doll methinks would better suit thy years
Than thoughts of love. Think on what thou art.

Carlotta.

Mean you to say that I should never wed ?

Queen.

Mean you to ask if you should wed to misery ?

What of Fredrico ? What, I ask, of him ?

A suitor royal, yet he suits not thee.

King.

Be not in marriage hasty,

Let thy first impressions wear with time.

Love will not lessen, though love's ardor cool.

Study thou the disposition well of him thou lov'st,

That no discordant element exist

To mar thy future being.

First love is oft like pictures, which at first

Do take the eye with rapture. Examined,

There we see defects so many

We gladly would destroy them.

As woman's choice is, so will woman be,

Happy or miserable her marriage existence through.

Carlotta.

He hath given me assurance of his true love.

Queen.

Did he protest his love ? I vow he did,

And call upon the stars to witness it,

Which, being addressed, turned pale

And hid their heads, pulling the canopy of heaven

O'er them, affrighted at so base hypocrisy.

Oh, you do well, Miss Simple, thus to take

The false for the true !

King.

That which is best, most precious, lies within,
Hidden, and hard to come at,
The dross upon the surface. If diamonds
Were as pebbles, had for stooping,
They were as little worth.
True love seeks not with vows
To prove its love. It is a glow, Heaven enkindled,
And shines from heart to heart
With rapturous certainty.
In love's own language speaks,
Nor utterance needs to make its presence
Known. False love doth show,
As thieves their honesty, cowards their valor prove.

Carlotta.

Coupled with vows of love so heavenly sweet
Which to have heard were never more to doubt
His good intentions — this ring he gave me.

Queen.

(Snatching and throwing ring to the floor.)

Lie there, thou token of a maiden's folly !
O, Heaven, is it possible
A maiden from her senses can so stray
As in the heat and passion of her love
To forget all else !
'T is a mystery past my accounting for.
We waste in idle words the precious hours,
Give counsel where good counsel is declined.
Let it end here, — Carlotta, your sin is great,
And every one doth know, great sin doth call
For punishment as great as is the sin.

King.

No, no !

Queen.

(To *King.*)

Know you not that maladies are met
With remedies to cure them
Ere they grow chronic ? Recall your reason ,
(To *Carlotta.*)

Had you some spirit of repentance shown,
Not sought with words most vile to bolster up
Your viler deed, our hearts had
Softened toward you.

King.

Speak for yourself alone.

Queen.

Had open armed received you, and forgiven
The bitter past. Briefly we decree
That you within the tower be imprisoned
For two long months.

King.

For two long months !

Queen.

I have said.

Oh, punishment too brief for so great sin !
Yet, I have said. Thy maid thy company
And keeper be, and she alone.
Would you were like her, and did hold
Our confidence as highly. Daily thou may'st walk

Within the garden, for air and exercise,
No person present save thou and she,
As I shall order give. More I have not to say.

King.

I can but say good-night, and kiss thee, sweet,
Ere thou depart. Be in the tower happy,
And when thou think'st, sometime think of me.
I shall not sleep, but I will dream of thee.

Carlotta.

(Going off with *Clarissa*.)

If fate so fix it that I ne'er shall wed
With him I love, I then were better dead.

King.

To you, Bolerio,
That praise is due, which at more time
We will accord you, in other than with
Empty, windy words. We 'll prove substantially
Our love of you.

Bolerio.

I am repaid, my liege, in serving you.

Queen.

Of rest we are in need; let us to rest.

King.

Oh, yet my mind is with much grief distressed!

Queen.

To rest, in Heaven's name!



Act 1111.



ACT III. SCENE I.

An apartment in the tower disclosing ramparts and a *Sentinel* on duty. *Carlotta* discovered lying on a couch, *Clarissa* bending over her.

Clarissa.

Sleep on, fair Princess, sweet *Carlotta*, sleep,
And be thy dreams as happy as thy thoughts,
When thou dost think on love.

Carlotta. (Starting up.)

Save me! This is not my chamber.

Clarissa.

What evil starts your Highness? Fear not you.
'T is I, *Clarissa*.

Carlotta.

Oh, I have had the brightest, happiest dream
That ever came to maid.

Clarissa.

I pray you tell it.

Carlotta.

Within a garden walked my love and I ;
Marble were its walls, of many colors blended,

Sculptured, and o'erhung with vines
Whose silvery leaves outshone the sun, and bore,
Deep-laden, fruits of gold,
Of divers shapes and sizes ;
Flowers, unknown to nature, profusely lay,
In bed and border.

The splash of perfumed waters filled the air ;
Each turn anew some newer beauty brought
Outvieing far the past; of birds exquisite,
Whose throats did tune to our approach,
And warble heavenly music.
Of statuary, chiselled so to life,
That I did think it moved. Of rustic bridges,
Curiously wrought, o'erleaping placid waters,
Adown whose depths did sportive nymphs appear,
And come at intervals in joyous throngs
Unto the surface, to look and smile on us.

Pursuing still this Eden infinite,
Came we at last unto a bower, where,
With flowers intertwined, our names appeared,
And therein entering, saw a burnished throne,
With diamonds and with jewels rare inlaid,
Its arms ingeniously like Cupids wrought
With arrows drawn and pointed at the sitters.

Then came at once the birds of the air,
The nymphs did leave their element and come,
Each animate form which there inhabited
Did flock to the bower,
And there as one commingle.
Oh, then did swell so celestial harmony,
Methought heaven itself had opened
And sent down its choicest choristers
For our entrancement.

Then I awoke and found it but a dream,
A dream, and I a prisoner confined
Within these dreary walls.

Clarissa.

Who sins himself must bear the penalty
Which doth of sinning come.

Carlotta.

Call you it sin to love ?
Oh, if it be, then sin I welcome. Yea, will nourish thee,
Deeming it honor evermore to sin.
Let not your courage with your conscience question
Against the truth, but truly answer me.
Is it not better I my heart bestow
Where love to love responds, than, for this Lord,
For filial reason, show a love I feel not ?

Clarissa.

Say he did truly love thee.

Carlotta.

Then would I pity, though I loved him not.
Fire, not water, burns, nor more could he
My heart with love enkindle.

Clarissa.

Pressed the King his suit ?

Carlotta.

Why, no, but with such sanction as his presence gave,
And words of kindly mention.
Words not alone the mind's desire show.

He knew I loved him not ; why speak him then
On all occasions good,
And break abruptly other matter off
To name his praises ? This to me,
Or in my presence ever, that I might hear it.
Could words directly spoken plainer tell
His mind's desire ? I do not think so.
Oh, me most wretched,
How greater than all miseries it is
To be of love deprived ! Did Clarissa ne'er love ?

Clarissa.

Whom, dear ?

Carlotta.

A lover sure. Oh, wherefore do you sigh ?

Clarissa.

For sooth I pity thee.

Carlotta.

Have I your pity, then you love me too ;
For where no love is pity seldom comes.

Clarissa.

Truly, I do.

Carlotta.

If you do truly love me let it show
In more than words.
Aid me, I prythee, hence.

Clarissa.

To aid thee hence to me were certain death,
Else would I aid thee as none else I would.

Carlotta.

Can you not say, when gone,
That I am here?

Clarissa.

And here to find you not, oh, blessed me,
It were to yield them up my life at once.

Carlotta.

As shows ingratitude in this harsh world,
So it in you appears. Gratitude,
There 's no such thing. A generous deed
Dies when 't is done. Nay,
Scarce survives the doing.
Did I not constantly your bedside sit,
While you in fever lay, watch o'er you like an angel,
Doing and anxious still that I might do ;
Soothe, with lotions cool, your heated brow,
And when you raved, as they in fever will,
Compose to slumber sweet ;
Bend oft in silent prayer my suppliant knee
For your deliverance? All this a Princess did,
And I am she.

Clarissa.

All this you did,
And this I 'm grateful for.

Carlotta.

The fever past, you convalescent, did I relax attention?
No, but still in various ways with kindness strove
To build your health again ; again to place
The bloom your cheek upon, taking you oft

In mine own carriage riding, and when you walked,
Attending on you still, and still supporting you.
Such is my tender love, and such is yours,
That will deny so little comfort now
When I do need it most.

Clarissa.

What would you I should do ?

Carlotta.

Aid me from hence disguised.
What, turn'st thou away ? Oh, ungrateful thou,
Is this thy love of which thou spak'st but now ?

Clarissa.

Tax me not unkindly ;
I must perforce deny that which I would,
Yet dare not.

Carlotta.

Tax you unkindly, ay, I know I do ;
Let me but kiss you for it ; there, no more ;
We 'll still be friends take fate what turn it may.
What, in tears ? I would thy parents could but
See thee now.

Clarissa.

My parents.

Carlotta.

Ay.

Clarissa.

Alas, what need you name them !
I saw them not to know them, nor they me long,

For I an infant at the castle gates
Was placed and found.

Carlotta.

Oft I have heard it, and have wondered oft
Whom might your parents be,
What circumstance of fortune, or strange freak,
Should cause them part you thus.
Believe me, I believe you gentle born.

Clarissa.

It is a theme delights me most to dwell on.
I have myself long thought so, have often dreamt it ;
Nothing I could wish but that it prove so.

Carlotta.

As stars and moon the night, the sun the day,
So, face, form, action, utterance, all,
Denote you what I say.
Tell me, Clarissa, could you wish to be
A maid forlorn as I, confined as I,
One who knows no sense of liberty,
Deprived as I the presence of your love,
And all for title ?

Clarissa.

Oh, yes, anything for title.

Carlotta.

The measured pace of royalty, to me, is irksome.
I would, forsooth, I had been humble born,
As free as air, to laugh and merry be,
To take unbonneted the noonday sun,

The wild flowers to pluck, with ungloved hand,
And into garlands weave the gathered treasure
For him I love ;
To chase, with laughter loud, the fluttering butterfly
The bright green fields across ;
To watch the humming-bird, if it alight,
Whose hue the radiant rainbow rivals ;
To go the sheep among,
And with that type of innocence to play,
The gentle lamb ;
And when the merry harvest time be come,
To spread the new-mown hay, and bind in sheaves
The golden low-laid grain ;
To catch the silvery rays of Luna bright,
As in some grove sequestered,
Arm in arm, fair lovers walking go.
This I am denied
And all for that I am a Princess born.
The humblest maid who roves the fields among
Is Princess more than I.
The toil-tired laborer, whose scanty pay
Doth him and his a bare subsistence give
Finds in his pay and labor more pleasure far
Than wealth and leisure bring.

Clarissa.

To bear your title, I would bear your ills,
And deem them pleasures.

Carlotta.

Why, so you may,
And I will be no less than you are now.

Clarissa.

I am all eagerness to learn the way.

Carlotta.

Why, see you not how easily 't is done ?
We but exchange our dress, the title follows it,
You then will be the Princess,
I, as you, will with my lover roam.

Clarissa.

Your fertile brain alone could germinate
So shrivelled seed ; we 'll nourish, water,
And dig it round, so it may live and flourish.
I a Princess! Bless me, how I shake!
I 'll give it no more thought, lest thinking more
Undo it ; 't is done.

Carlotta.

Your face for penance veiled will bear you out,
And seem, unseen, the brighter.

Clarissa.

I 'll to the King at once ;
An eager auditor to welcome tale,
What will not he, when he the news shall learn
Of thy repentance!

Carlotta.

Stay, thou dost forget
I must convey—by means to be provided—
To the Duke his manner of approach.
Know you a man whom you could trust ?

Carlotta.

And he a soldier.

Clarissa.

And a brave and true one.
Love is a weapon keener than the sword,
And with it I 'll assail him—
What love demands, love never did deny,
Nor will he me, being with me in love.
Said I in love? 't is adoration great
As man on woman ever did bestow;
But it avails him not to bend his knee
And vow I am of beauty, beauty's queen,
Nor ever shall, till love my eyes transform
And place him there, an object beautiful.
Until in winter summer's heat shall be,
I shall for him ne'er feel love's ecstasy.

Carlotta.

(Aside.)

She talks of love who never felt its pangs.

Clarissa.

Yet, though I love him not, his love I 'll use
And bend him to my purpose thoroughly.
If he refuse, for him I 'll simulate
A love I feel not. Thus draw him on
This business to do, which done, will prove,
If not for him, for us, an act of love.
Leave all to me.

Carlotta.

To thee, as to none other, leave I all.
Haste, good Clarissa, nor this truth forget,
Time tarries long when sweethearts, lovers, wait.
[Exit *Clarissa*.]

So wise, so weak, I can but pity her,
And yet for mine own ends, am pleased to pity her.
Thus is the world with glittering gewgaws caught;
Most craves it that which would itself most harm.
Oh, title, word unmeaning, as oft on fools
As on the wise bestowed,
Money oft it brings, but money not wisdom buys,
And oft begets a world of misery,
More than the want of money.

Enough contentment brings,
Or rather keeps, man from the door,
The harsh, cold door of charity, and takes not
His better virtues from him.

Enter four *Ladies of the Court*.]

Lady.

Your Highness, we are come,
Sent by the King, your father, to beguile
Your sadness.

Carlotta.

Ladies, I give you welcome to this place,
A wretched place,—I would on your,
Account that it were better.

Lady.

We would it were, your Highness, for your sake.

Carlotta.

I am content since she hath willed it so.

Lady.

Against her will, your Highness, as you know.

Carlotta.

What is your duty from the King to me ?

Lady.

To sing, your Highness.

Carlotta.

Will it be a love song, something sweet ?
If not, I would you would not sing to me at all.

Lady.

Sad is the song we sing ;
'T is like the robin's when her mate is stolen
By the rude hand of youth.

Carlotta.

Sad song ne'er lessened sadness.
You from my mother, not my father, come,
If I mistake not. It is no matter ;
I prythee, sing it, be it ne'er so sad.

Ladies.

(Singing.)

A maiden fair,
With flowing hair,
Awaiteth her lover to see ;
The time is past,
He will come at last,
And she scanneth eagerly.

Chorus.

Sing heigh, sing ho,
Of the maiden, oh,
The maiden who doth pine,
With a heart forlorn,
Of her lover shorn,
And the fear he may never be mine.

The winds do blow,
Fast falls the snow,
And the maid doth yet abide
In that casement high,
With each thought and each sigh
For him, and on what hath betide.

O maiden fair,
Of hope despair ;
Thou waiteth in vain to see;
With another this night
His love he did plight,
And such is man's constancy.

Carlotta.

'T is a sweet, sad song, well sung, and I thank you ;
Commend me to my mother ; say you saw me,
Sang to me, to me her daughter, her daughter
To her duty full restored, for such indeed I am.
I am no more the Princess, but her daughter.
Pardon these broken words, my grief is great,
And I can speak but as you hear me,
Disconnectedly.

Lady.

All will yet be well.

Carlotta.

Heaven grant it may. My maid has gone before;
Avouch her story. Report me as you find me,
Wet with weeping, at thought of my great wrong.

Lady.

We will do so, and gladly.

[*Exeunt ladies.*]

Enter *Clarissa.*]

Carlotta.

Was woman by woman ever so deceived?

Clarissa.

Now come I back with news indeed.

Carlotta.

Speak; if 't is good news, then 't is news, indeed.

Clarissa.

If man was ever mad the King is mad.

Carlotta.

Mad?

Clarissa.

With joy of your return.

Carlotta.

But sent you to my Love, and when will
He be here? Bandy not words, but prythee,
Tell me.

Clarissa.

I did the trusty messenger seek out
Of whom I spoke, to do this errand;
You know him well, Rinaldo, a foolish fellow,
Who will for profit any service take
And reckon not the risk.

Carlotta.

But is Rinaldo trusty ?

Clarissa.

Trusty as foolish and brave as both.
This very night the King will give
An entertainment to honor your return.

Carlotta.

It is for you, not me, that this is done;
You are the Princess ; I am her no more ;
When I return wedded with the Duke,
Then will I take my title once again.

Clarissa.

The guard approaches, retire we to the
Inner chamber.

(The castle bell rings. 'Captain of the Guard and Soldiers
appear on the ramparts and exchange sentries, *Baseno*
being left on duty.)

The guard is gone, and all alone
Baseno keeps the passage to the tower.
He shall be soon disposed of;
Here is a powder whose potency
Will put him slumbering, who but tastes of it.

(*Carlotta* retires.)

Baseno, *Baseno*, I say ?

Baseno.

Stand there, ho ! who calls ?

Clarissa.

Hush, 't is I, Clarissa.

Baseno.

Clarissa, as I live.

Clarissa.

Make no noise.

Baseno.

I would I might come in to thee.

Clarissa.

Thou may'st.

Baseno.

Well; this is luck.

Enters.]

Clarissa.

Softly and low; in yonder chamber sleeps
The Princess.

Baseno.

Thou only art my princess.
Phew, how the wind howls!
I were well rid of this night's duty.

Clarissa.

A storm approaches. (Hands him drink.)
Here is that will please thee.

Baseno.

Thou art the sweetest of the angels.
Here 's to thee, sweetheart.
May I kiss thee for it ?

Clarissa.

You may, upon the forehead.

Baseno.

Or lips or nothing.

Clarissa.

Do it quickly, then; time goes, and so must thou.

Baseno.

(Kisses her.)

St. Michael, what a clap of thunder was that!

Clarissa.

'T will be a rough night. Here, drink of that
And be silent.

(Thunder and lightning.)

Baseno.

This is the best wine I 've yet tasted.
It takes hold at once.

(Singing.)

There 's nothing so good as good wine.
To cheer up the heart,
Bid all sorrow depart,
Give me a good glass of good wine.

Clarissa.

Peace, fool,
Would you awake the Princess ?

Baseno.

What fool, forsooth, did ever hold his peace ?

(Thunder.)

Clarissa.

Between thee and the thunder, here 's a pretty clatter.
Have you lost your wits ?

Baseno.

In wine, methinks, my wits are almost drowned.

(Sings.)

There 's nothing in life
Half so good as a wife
Along with a glass of good wine.

(Speaks.)

Who drinks not wine, life's pleasures
Ne'er enjoys.

(*Carlotta* from time to time looks out upon them. *Baseno*
follows *Clarissa* around a table to catch her.)

Clarissa.

Come, sit thee down like the good fellow
Thou art, and enjoy thyself.

Baseno.

I was now but a fool, and now am I a good fellow
in thy esteem. Truly, thou blow'st hot and cold in
one breath. Not so, neither, for your good fellow doth
oft realize he is but a good fool.

Clarissa.

Let me entreat thee sit.

Baseno.

I will catch and kiss thee

Whil'st legs and lips last.

(Falls prostrate over a chair.)

Clarissa.

(Assisting him to rise and sit.)

Now art thou fallen, indeed.

Baseno.

To fall is easy, but to rise again argues some ability
in him who succeeds in doing so.

(Singing.)

Life is but a breathing spell,

Herein to sweat and fret us;

To-day we're here, but who can tell

Where may to-morrow fetch us?

Clarissa.

Good Baseno, sweet Baseno, be silent

In Heaven's name, I beseech thee.

Baseno.

Thou think'st of Heaven only in distress.

More wine I say, or over goes your bar.

Clarissa.

Bar, what bar. Take you me for a barmaid?

Baseno.

Barmaids have pretty been, and married well.

Clarissa.

So will not she who weds herself with thee,

Thou noisemonger thou;

Thou art composed all of wine.

Baseno.

(Sings.)

We live but a day
So drink while we may
Drink, drink, drink ;

Or as the song goes,— know'st thou how the song goes ?

Clarissa.

No, what song ? You were best cease thy caterwauling.

Baseno.

Caterwauling. I will sing thee, or any man in Italy
for a flagon.

Clarissa.

(Aside.)

It is the wine, and not the powder works;
I 'll make it stronger, so must it put him
Sleeping.

(Hands wine, and is held round the waist by *Baseno.*)

Baseno.

Come, charmer sweet, and sit thee on my knee,
And wine we 'll drink, and love tales
Sweetly tell.

Clarissa.

(Breaking away from him.)

Out, thou detestable of all ruffians,
I will not talk with thee.

Baseno.

Or talk or not, wine shalt my company be;
More wine, more wine, I say !

(Sings.)

A lass
And a glass
A night with to pass,
And get thee to bed in the morning.
I did never drink heavier wine.
Heigho, how stupid I feel ! I will crawl
Under this table and sleep if I 'm shot for it.

Clarissa.

Come, lady, come !

Enters Carlotta.]

Our noisy sentinel to bed is gone,
Leaving his duty and ourselves alone.
Look where he lies oblivious of fear.

Carlotta.

Sound be thy sleep, nor harm environ thee,—
It is upon the time he should approach.
Look from the casement ; dost thou nothing see ?

Clarissa.

Nothing I see.

Carlotta.

Nothing ?

Clarissa.

No star appears to shed its feeble rays
Upon the world beneath.

Carlotta.

What hear you ?

Clarissa.

The cheery chirp of cricket and bark of distant dog
Are all I hear.

Carlotta.

Please you, give way;
Love's eyes are keen and can the darkness pierce.

Clarissa.

If he should fail you now.

Carlotta.

Love knows no barrier.
Even now my heart unto his steps responsive throbs
And speaks his near approach,
Lo, where the sun its radiance unfolds,
And makes of darkness day.
Enter *Duke.*]

Clarissa.

Truly, 't is he.

Carlotta.

Oh, joy of joys again to be with thee!

Duke.

How dost thou, sweet?

Carlotta.

Oh, now most happy !

Duke.

Heaven preserve thee ever!
Canst thou in place so wretched still be happy?

Carlotta.

I could be happy in a churchyard if thou wert company.

Duke.

Thanks to thy maid, here am I with thee.

Clarissa.

You do me honor, my Lord.

Duke.

Honor is well enough, yet not enough,
Save unto him who hath the means withal
To cope ill fortune with.
Oh, who can wear this feather in his cap
While sharp-toothed hunger at his stomach gnaws
And feel content ?
No, you shall have that which more in need will stand
you
Than all the empty honor heaped on man
Since Cæsar;
Something more solid; that which may be grasped
When placed in the hand ; 't is gold' 't is thine,
'T is thy deserving; give me no thanks,
And when I prosper in my fortune so
That I may call my love my wife indeed
Then I 'll reward thee further.

Carlotta.

(Looking from casement.)

Happy augury, the storm doth clear,
And yon bright twinkling star
Makes toward the horizon.
So must we too, for safety, soon pursue
Our happy way. Come, good Clarissa,
We 'll to the next chamber for interchange of raiment,
Needs must I leave you, love, a while alone.

Duke.

This, till thou return. (They kiss.)

(*Carlotta and Clarissa go out and exchange apparel.*)

She's gone, and I within the tower am alone,
A prey to thought. Most wretched place herein to
cage a man,

Say naught of woman. Methinks already I do feel
A dampness to enter into me which, with my blood
commingling,

Courses my system through,
And drives me from myself. (Takes glass of wine.)

Come, thou sweet spirit of wine,
Man's friend or enemy as he will have thee,
Come, let me taste thee;
Let me invoke thine aid to drive these vapors from me,
To cheer and to warm me, as thou hast often done,
As when on field of battle, breathless and faint,
Friend nor assistance near, all hope abandoned,
Thou then did'st bear me with thy succor off,
Who else had died so. No,
Let man revile thee. Let him storm against thee
Who doth abuse thee, for he hath cause to hate thee.
Not hell itself I fear as thou mine enemy.

(Knocking.)

One knocks. What to do I know not.
Here is no concealment. Reply to it,—no,
That were certain capture, perchance death.

(Knocking.)

I can admit and from behind despatch him.
Who the wiser?
Oh, such an act might well become a villain,
And make blush the veriest coward.
Restrain me, Heaven,

L. of C.

Let me not stain my hand with deed so foul.
Murder, O merciful powers,
The thought itself strikes terror to my soul,
How then the deed when done. (Knocking.)
If this should rouse the guard, then, what then,—
Some deeds themselves excuse, and this is one;
'T is settled, die he must. (Knocking.)
Grim conscience like a demon stands before me
And bars my passage farther. (Knocking.)
Shall I endure this longer? Conscience, begone!
Now, ruffian, meet thy doom.

Clarissa. (Entering hastily.)

My Lord, my Lord,
This person, by the knocking, should be Rinaldo,
The messenger whom I did send to thee
In the forest. Listen! Who knocks?

Pedro.

'T is I, Pedro.

Clarissa.

Is this a time of night to come knocking
At a lady's chamber?

Pedro.

I come from the King.

Clarissa.

His pleasure?

Pedro.

That the Princess come before him, and presently.

Clarissa.

I will tell her so.

Enter *Carlotta*.]

Pedro.

He would her Highness come with me.

Clarissa.

Wait her in the lower chamber.

She will not keep thee long.

Enter *Rinaldo* hastily.]

Duke.

What is amiss that hastily you come,

And spent for breath?

Rinaldo.

Hence, hence for safety.

The Captain of the Guard, filled with suspicion,

Chased me at the heels, and even now 's upon you.

[Exit *Rinaldo*.]

Carlotta.

Oh, chance unlucky!

Duke.

Thus are our plans frustrated, we divided,

One kiss,—the woodman's hut, canst find it in the
dark?

Carlotta.

Thy love my light, look thou to see me there.

(*Carlotta* escapes by way of the ramparts. *Clarissa* retires into
inner chamber. Enter hastily *Captain of the Guard*.)

Captain of the Guard.

Yield thee, ruffian!

Duke.

What fellow art thou ?

Captain of the Guard.

Fellow in thy teeth. A soldier I. Yield thee, I say !

Duke.

I know thee not.

Captain of the Guard.

I have no words for villain such as thou.

Yield thee, or die !

(They fight. *Baseno* issues from beneath table.)

Against fate, not man, I fight. Help, help, *Baseno*,

Cut the demon down ! Ring the alarm bell ;

The furies catch him. I am o'erpowered.

Haste, *Baseno*, haste !

(The bell is rung. *Baseno* rushes between and receives the thrust intended for the *Duke*, who escapes. *Baseno* falls. *Soldiers* rush in.)

The Princess! haste, haste !

(*Clarissa*, disguised as the *Princess* and veiled, appears at the door.)

Clarissa.

I am here.

[Exit.

Captain of the Guard.

(To *Baseno*.)

Being unarmed, why did you come between ?

Baseno.

Oh, I die of pain !

Captain of the Guard.

Are you much hurt ?

Baseno.

More than much, my mortal wound.

Captain of the Guard.

Lift him with care,
And let a surgeon to his wound attend;
His folly, not his duty, ends his life.



Act IV.



ACT IV. SCENE I.

A corridor in the King's castle. Enter *Merano* in chains.
A Priest, Captain of the Guard, and Soldiers.

Merano.

Be merciful. Here let me stand and rest.

Priest.

His chains bear heavy on him; give him leave.

Captain of the Guard.

Be it so.

Merano.

And must I die?

Priest.

'T is so decreed.

Merano.

And in such manner?

Priest.

Be comforted.

Merano.

To die were nothing,—but so to die!
To leave in infamy a name behind
Whose every thought and effort of my life
It were to build, and must it now
Upon so slight a cause come tumbling down,
That of the noble structure which I reared
Nothing doth now remain,—and all for what?
For that I cannot alter the decree
Of fate. I am but human. Can man more
Than do the best he can? Am I a coward?
Who's he dare but suggest it? Place me but before
him
And I with sword would thrust the slander down
His lying throat.

Priest.

This must not be, these words —

Merano.

“ Must not be.” Beside the block I 'd say it.
And back my words with deed.

Priest.

Peace. Peace be thine.
Look upward. Of things worldly
You now are done. Here, slander can harm
No more. Give thought to Heaven—
To Him whose Son, our blessed Saviour, came,
And for our redemption suffered,
That we might live in glory evermore.

Merano.

Why, so I do, and have, and ever shall
While yet I live.

Priest.

A dual worship,
Of heaven and the world,
Is good as none.

Merano.

Oh, who that lives but feels
So great a wrong!

Priest.

The greater wrong, the greater peace be thine
In heaven.

Merano.

Such is the world,
And such the reward oft comes
Of honest effort, while he, less able,
But by fortune favored, reaches his goal,
And is of all acclaimed.

Priest.

Life's trials and its crosses
Are but as steps that lead the way to heaven;
And blessed is he who doth make use of them,
To his eternal peace.

Captain of the Guard.

Are you yet done?

Priest.

As you hope for mercy,
Give us leave.

Captain of the Guard.

To it then, and have over;
I know my duty.

Priest.

Would all men did.

Merano.

Alas ! poor world. When Fortune smiled,
This churlish fellow, spaniel-like, did fawn;
But being down, and out of Fortune's favor,
Deigns not to know me more.

Hark you, sirrah,
In whom no feeling of compassion is,
Know this of me. Were I in hell, and thou
In heaven blessed, I still would be thy better.

Priest.

Forbear, forbear! Such thoughts
Are not for thee. Let me adjure thee.
Leave thinking of the world, and think on Him
To whom thou goest. Wouldst thou impenitent
Thy Maker meet, thy sins upon thy soul ?
Thy time is brief. Even now thou stand'st
Upon the verge, the awful brink of all eternity.
Think, oh, think on that.

Merano.

And when must go ?

Priest.

Within these six hours
Art thou doomed to die.

Merano. (Kissing crucifix.)

Heaven rest my soul!

Priest.

Amen, with all my soul.

Merano.

New light breaks in upon me—
The light of Heaven—and fills me with His love;
Lifts me above the world,
Which now I view but as a place despised;
Oh, that man might feel
The hope and comfort of a faith reposed
Implicitly in God! What were life
If with our struggle here our life were done,
But rancor, envy, never-ceasing strife,
Hope unfulfilled, despair, and death!

Priest.

Speaks thy conscience this?

Merano.

As Heaven witnesseth.

Priest.

Peace be thine,
And thine a lasting glory.
Within the castle's sanctuary
We 'll further grace thee with our holy office,
And prepare thee for His presence. Come.

Merano.

And none too soon. Father, I thank thee;
Push on. Yonder 's the way,
The way to heaven.

SCENE 2.

A wood bordering an open country. Enter the *Duke*
and *Carlotta*, hand in hand.

Duke.

Night's reign is o'er; the sun the sceptre sways, and
comes,
New-risen, ruddy-faced, and bright, to deck the form
of Nature.
How calm doth all appear!
The air with gentle zephyrs scarce is moved;
The feathered songsters early are astir,
And wake the woods with gladness.

Distant is heard the lowing of the herd
To early pasture driven;
The shepherd's call catches upon the ear,
And now the plough-boy, whistling his way along,
To healthful labor goes.
Does not this brook more tuneful music make
Than that in palace played?
O sweet serenity of nature, who would miss thee?
Who exchange thy quiet for the scenes
In pompous city acted?

Carlotta.

Such a life to me were ecstasy.

Duke.

The dew yet glistens on yon flowery bank,
Else would I ask thee sit; but stay, my love,
My cloak o'erspread, from dampness shall protect,
And needful rest secure thee.

Carlotta.

Fatigue and I are enemies forsworn
When thou art company.

Duke.

I will a nosegay cull,
And in thy hair entwine these woodland flowers;
Simple they are, but pretty, exceeding far
Those which in gardens grow.

Carlotta.

Think you so?

Duke.

I do, in that they are the work of Nature's self,
No hand of man assisting; so, too, association lends
 them grace,
And makes them doubly charming.
The cultured flower ever did to me a prisoner seem,
Like some fair lady in a palace pent,
And in her sorrow lovely.

 Type of thyself, till now unseen,
The modest violet blooms, half hidden in the verdure.
There, now look you like a queen,
Fair nature's queen, Flora herself excelling.

Carlotta.

Accept, I pray, for these expressions sweet
My bounteous thanks. Flowers for love were made,
And thou shalt be no less adorned than I.
Thy hat around place I this wreath. Around thy neck
This garland. This double flower next thy heart shall
 stand
For both our loves.

Duke.

I shall in flowers smother.

Carlotta.

Indeed you shall, nor shall you see for them,
But must by me be led.

Duke.

Oh, happy thought, to be by Venus led
In chains of flowers !

Carlotta.

The birds, mistaking thee for some fair bower,
Will thereupon surround thee, and give out
Their choicest melody.

Duke.

Thy voice no music ever can excel.

Carlotta.

And none with thine compare.

Duke.

The sun the heavens climbs. Oh, let us on,
Still hand in hand, unto some country house,
Wherein we 'll find both food and rest.

Carlotta.

I have partaken all the way along
Of thy sweet voice.

Duke.

I would I could my heart's dear rapture pour
Unto thine ear, in words of burning love.
Let me upon thy lips love's token press.

Carlotta.

Love's token.

Duke.

'T is a kiss.

Now we will on; each step we take
Doth bring us one step nearer heaven's gate.

SCENE 3.

An apartment in the King's castle. *Clarissa* (unveiled) seated,
her face buried in her arms on a table. She rises.

Clarissa.

A crown immortal had not been so clutched
As I at this; I who well knew
That title in itself no pleasure brings
Even to him entitled, and must have known
I could not long this borrowed plumage wear
With pleasure to myself.
Oh, worse it seems than murder 'gainst self committed;
That were indeed an ending; an end all here;

(Draws dagger.)

The means is at command. If that were all,
How easy, now and here, to end it all.

(Throws away dagger.)

Go, go thou instrument of blood and death,
And be no more about me, lest I grow bold,
Or in a fit of weakness undertake
That which I should not;
I dare not trust myself.

I have fed my vanity so far,
That it hath like a far-stretched bladder burst,
And overwhelmed me.

Enter *Pedro*.]

What news?

Pedro.

None.

Clarissa.

Hear you naught ?

Pedro.

Nothing.

Clarissa.

Would the worst were known,
Lest apprehension, deadlier oft than proof,
My ending make.

Pedro.

You are looking ill.

Clarissa.

Remorse is mine,
And where remorse is, health can never come.

Pedro.

The end, be it what it may,
Will be the same, though you do note it lightly.

Clarissa.

'T is easier ever good advice to give
Than to follow the advice that 's given.
Tell me not what to do, unless you tell
How I may do it.

Pedro.

Occasion had you none
To do this deed.

Clarissa.

Occasion to evil doers ever comes;
To me it came, and I embraced it.
But now I find—too late, indeed, we find—
How easier 't is an evil deed to do,
Than to repair an ill deed done.

Pedro.

All will yet be well.

Clarissa.

If I do innocently harm a friend,
Though blameless held, scarce less the hurt I feel
Than he who did receive it.
Yet, I have wilfully my best friends harmed,
The King and Queen, whose high esteem thus losing,
Lose I all, their high esteem and them.
A life of happiness and ease assured,
Is by this wicked deed forever lost,
And I an object hateful to myself
Must henceforth live. To die
Were better far than thus to live
And be by conscience goaded;
To carry ever sad reflection's cup
Whose bitter contents I myself did fill,
And I alone must sip.

Pedro.

Hang not thy head; look up.

Clarissa.

What wonder is it I do hang my head,
My face to hide for base ingratitude?

I marvel much that mortals are such fools,
To yield the good, and baser motives choose.
I dreamt last night.

Pedro.

Dreamed ?

Clarissa.

A hateful dream, which bodes me, I am sure,
Some present ill.

Pedro.

What dreamed you ?

Clarissa.

Methought the Queen beside the bed did come
Where I lay sleeping. Smiling, she stooped and
stroked me,
Placed oft in loving contact lip to lip,
On me bestowed a mother's fond affection,
Which even then, though dreaming, did appear
A circumstance most strange,
And filled my mind with fancy;
Many and happy were the terms, and sweet,
Which she did shower on me, speaking oft:
" Only a maid, thou but a maid, come thou with me,
Who can so gracefully bedeck a throne."

Hand in hand she led me,
Even to the throne, thereon seated me,
And with her royal hands did crown me ;
The sceptre next within my grasp she placed,
And then low kneeling, termed me " Majesty,"
And wished my reign a long and prosperous one.

Then I, with power vested, laughed for joy,
Ere I myself commanding, could assume
The sober form and face of majesty.
“ Now Madam, get you gone,” I cried,
With all the dignity I could command;
“ Get you without my Court, and quickly, too.”
At this she jested ; wherefore I did rebuke her,
And spake thus:
“ He farthest falls, who, standing highest, falls;
And you who have so fallen ne’er can rise,
Ne’er can regain the power late was thine,
Which when it was, then had you wisely done
To use your power, power still to have.
What have you now that you may call your own ?
Even so a fool would all his substance spend,
And live thenceforth, a wandering mendicant.
Go you and likewise live, and end your days
With what of comfort folly’s act affords.”

Pedro.

What spoke the Queen to this ?

Clarissa.

With weeping eyes, upon her knees she fell,
And in a voice of pity did beseech
That she might be my servant, only this,
Whose duties she would faithfully perform,
And would not ask the sceptre back again.
Brief to speak,
Her present banishment I did decree,
When lo, the King, till then a stranger, came
And, hastily advancing to the throne,
Threw me thence headlong down.

Unto a dungeon was I then consigned;
Fettered I was and fastened to the ground,
The slimy ground, whereon did serpents crawl,
The vile companions of my solitude;
Bats and birds uncanny filled the air,
And oft their wings the dreaded stillness broke,
Whereat the owl from slumber being disturbed
Did issue loud his hideous doleful cry.

Forms strange and monster-like,
With eyes aglow, did pierce the darkness,
Yea, did look as they would there devour me;
Which time, loud noises were, and fearful cries,
Of clanking chains, and torture-suffering souls,
And at brief intervals did silence reign.

Pedro.

How could you, in the darkness, see all this ?

Clarissa.

So in my dream it was, 't is all I know;
And thus I dreamt I passed my length of years,
And was at last to execution led.
Oh, torture terrible,
My severed head, falling face upward turned,
And all its sense retaining, viewed the body,
Whose crimson, as in scorn, it spurted on it,
And covered quite the face;
Then, oh, then, did I in terror waking leap from bed,
And " Murder! " cry, and Heaven's mercy beg;
My hands instinctively did clutch my head
To learn for truth if it were mine or no,
So hideous real did seem this mockery.
Heaven its mercy lend,

I would not dream another such a dream
To be the ruler of one half the world
And reign in peace perpetual.

Pedro.

Dreams are but dreams,
The offspring, as you know, of minds disturbed.

Clarissa.

Evil of evil, joy from good acts spring.
Would I had been born a fool,
For to be wise is often to be wicked, knowing,
Not avoiding, the peril of our lives
The fool doth sail upon a tranquil sea,
Fearing no trouble.

Pedro.

I am commanded to search you out.

Clarissa.

Who hath commanded this ?

Pedro.

The Queen.

Clarissa.

And when upon this errand set you out ?

Pedro.

To-morrow.

Clarissa.

Give me thy hand. Farewell,
And if I no more meet thee, still be happy.

Pedro.

Hope for the best.

[Exit *Pedro*.

Clarissa.

I never more will cherish any wish,
But take events as time shall force them on me,
Oh, that my vanity had overcome me not!
I could be merry now.
Give me my gown again, and take your title,
Since titles ever coupled are with care.
They say it is ambition doth urge us on,
But I do think the devil drives us on.
A fool is he who for renown
Would yield contentment, even for a crown.
My soldier-lover comes who weeps me lost.

(Veils her face.)

Enter *Baseno*.]

What, still in tears, *Baseno*? Fie, for shame!
Tears more a woman than a man become,
Think of your soldiership.

Baseno.

I can think only of her.

Clarissa.

But she, you say, is gone.

Baseno.

Gone, but not I hope forever.

Clarissa

What if it prove so?

Baseno.

That she no more return ?

Clarissa.

Ay.

Baseno.

Then I am desperately resolved.

Clarissa.

To what intent ?

Baseno.

I cannot live without her.

Clarissa.

Foolish fellow, you would not harm yourself ?

Baseno.

Alas, I know not what I might do!

Clarissa.

Was it not by her means you received your wound,
And the King's reprimand, and barely escaped
A dungeon ?

Baseno.

'T was not her fault.

Clarissa.

Whose, then ?

Baseno.

The drink did it.

Clarissa.

And she gave it thee.

Baseno.

I took it of my own wish; I blame not her.

Clarissa.

I see thou art obstinately in love,
And there is no help for thee.
What have you there, a picture?

Baseno.

Her picture; would it were herself.
Look, what an eye she hath.

Clarissa.

Here, kiss my hand, and think 't is Clarissa.

Baseno.

Your Highness, I fear, makes light of my grief.

Clarissa.

Do not believe it; and furthermore, if you make
Not a child of yourself, it may be that I
Will marry you.

Baseno.

Your Highness marry with me.

Clarissa.

With thee.

Baseno.

I must beg your Highness' permission to pass along.

Clarissa.

Do as you will, but do yourself no wrong.
The maid you love, her you again shall see,
But ask me not when, nor where.
For truth receive it, and till then be happy.
[Exeunt separately.]

SCENE 4.

Throne room in *King's* castle. *King* and *Queen* numerously attended.

Queen.

Hath pardon issued to Merano?

King.

It has; he now is free.
And apprehended, and in chains, are those
Whose perjured oaths did doom him to the block.
For 't is past doubt revealed
The ambitious Licencio (in whose way he stood)—
With other of our Council by him suborned—
Did heinously conspire, and fix upon
His ignominious death.

Queen.

I am lost, and know not what to think.

King.

Let but occasion come, and seeming virtue
To hideous vice transforms.

Queen.

'T is true.

Virtue is oft a cloak vice to conceal,
Revealed when the occasion come.

King.

All men are honest where nothing is to steal—
But of Carlotta.
I had not thought so soon to be transformed
From that I was.

Queen.

You had no need so soon to note the event
With this festivity — this night indeed, to-morrow
night,
Had been a night too soon. The night succeeding
Would find you rested, and with sleep restored,
To grace the occasion better.

King.

How could I sleep for joy, or say I slept?
Could sleep such comfort and contentment give
As now are mine? Do not believe it.

Come, be thou cheerful,

And wear upon thy countenance the smile
Which should of all be thine.
As we, thou know'st so our guests will be,
Whose feelings and whose actions but reflect
The image of our own.
Yea, bid joy be welcome, for Heaven knows
So little comfort doth this world bestow
That when it offer, it would folly seem
In us to accept it not.
But tell me,
Hath she not quickly altered in her mind?

Queen.

She has.

King.

'T is like she loved him not so much for all.

Queen.

A love professed, not felt,
The offspring of a giddy, girlish brain.

King.

Henceforth let mirth and frolic hold the sway
Till lately held by gloom.

Away all care
Which until now played havoc with my brain.
In honor of our daughter, we devote
To each and all this evening's entertainment.
Cast ye aside all courtly graces,
And be yourselves alike in mind and manners.
Nor king nor kingdom for the nonce I 'll know,
But be in mirth as ye. Prythee let 's be seated.

Queen.

Now, good Bolerio, being prepared, prythee
Make beginning.

King.

Carlotta hath not yet come.
Had we not better wait ?

Queen.

'T is strange.

King.

An hour now is past since I did send.

Queen.

She will come anon.

King.

Go you, Rinaldo, and request her thither.

[Exit *Rinaldo*.]

Bolerio, that we did love, cherish, and enfold you,
As is a brother firmly to our heart,
Needs not the proof of words.

Bolerio.

Have I in aught offended ?

King.

No, only we could wish
That as our love was, and is, it may continue long
To blossom and to bless you.

Bolerio.

Be assured, no act of mine shall mar it,
Or make it less.

(*King and Queen descend throne.*)

King.

We owe thee much, so much,
That we do think it ne'er can be repaid
With any simple service we may do thee.

Bolerio.

I have done but duty.

King.

Thou hast exceeded all duty;
Thou hast shown such acts
As love and friendliness alone can urge to.

Bolerio.

To be thus commended
Is to have reached the height of my ambition.

Queen.

Thy words no less thine actions thee become.

King.

And we no less are honored, honoring thee,
Which now our purpose is.

(To *Page*.)

Bring me my sword.

Bolerio.

What would your gracious Majesties?

King.

With title honor thee.

Bolerio.

I am most happy being what I am,
And what I am I would for life remain.
'T is twice ten years and five since you to me
My present office gave. Therein you honored me,
And I its duties faithfully to fill
Have ever tried. That I have pleased—
I seek no praise —my present having proves;
For had I not, had I been negligent, indifferent,
Or shown myself incapable, you would in
Common justice to yourself,
Howe'er you liked my person,
Have displaced me.

I now am old, and age his habits
Cannot safely change from what they are,

As younger persons can; but still must bend
His footsteps, still pursue his way accustomed,
Or yield himself as lost.

Queen.

Speak on, Bolerio, if more you have to speak.

Bolerio.

Oh, believe me,
I rather would my present office hold
Unto the end than to exchange it for a dukedom
And exchange the life whereto I 'm wedded;
Thus kneeling, I entreat you.
Enter *Page* bearing sword on a cushion.]

Queen.

Most men advancement seek,
You decline it offered.

King.

Thou man of sweet content,
I would not from thy pleasure take one jot
For all the world.
Hold thou thy office still, and still receive
Thy merited advancement.

(Knights him. A flourish of trumpets.)

Arise thee now a Knight of Alcanaz,
For such thou art, and second unto none
In all our realm.

Bolerio.

Since you this honor have conferred upon me,
Be mine the care to guard it zealously.

Queen.

Long live you to enjoy it.

King.

How say you to it all ?

All.

Long may Bolerio in honor live !

King.

Carlotta yet is absent. Go thou, good Pedro,
And bring us word wherefore she
Comes not.

[Exit Pedro.]

Enter *Captain of the Guard.*]

Welcome, yea, nor thou alone;
The commonest soldier, he who stands
In rank the lowest, is in our presence welcome;
All this night are welcome.

Captain of the Guard.

I would I could thy happy welcome greet
With news as truly happy.

Queen.

News ? What news ?

King.

What 's the matter, pray ?

Captain of the Guard.

Let me depart unspoken,
Nor vex this glad occasion with the words
Which I must, speaking, utter.

King.

Hence foul suspicion;
Let the worst be known that it may cure the worst.
Hold we our daughter still ?

Captain of the Guard.

Deeply repentant does the Princess come,
And will anon be with you.

King.

Why then the worst of news which thou canst speak
Shall be as no word spoken.

Captain of the Guard.

The villainous Duke, if Duke he be,
With courage matchless to the tower came ——

King.

Stay, stay thy tongue.

Captain of the Guard.

'T is true I found him there.

Queen.

Within the tower ?

King.

Past sentinels and all ?

Captain of the Guard.

Howe'er it chanced, my liege, I found him there
And with this sword engaged him.

Queen.

Without connivance this had never been.

King.

I am amazed.

Audacity hath crept from far and near

And in this ruffian centres.

I must henceforth my chamber strongly guard,

Lest I in bed be bearded.

Queen.

Yea, even now may he be company, and smiling

Mock our wonder.

Captain of the Guard.

So great his haste, I think he yet doth run.

King.

The Princess saw him not, no ?

Captain of the Guard.

Not as I think.

King.

Be it a secret kept,

Lest it in her love's passion re-arouse,

And sweet repentance mar; and till she come,

We will in full this serious matter hear

To learn where blame should fall.

No more. She comes.

Enter *Clarissa*, disguised as the *Princess*, veiled.]

Clarissa.

(Kneeling.)

Most humbly I implore forgiveness.

King.

Most freely we forgive thee.

Clarissa.

That I have been a wayward, foolish girl,
More capable of evil than of good,
Caring but too little for thy good direction,
Though be it to my everlasting shame,
I do most humbly acknowledge it.

King.

Most freely we forgive thee, and wipe out
All trace of thy past conduct.

Clarissa.

My every future act shall be
An atonement for past folly.

Queen.

But wherefore goest thou veiled ?

Clarissa.

I would you should not look upon that shame
Which lies so heavy on me.

King.

Do not speak of that.

Clarissa.

Let me for penance of my sin go veiled
For two brief months; these away,
You then shall see your daughter as she was,
And not the maid I am.

King.

For two long months! No! No!

Clarissa.

I am resolved, if you will have it so.

King.

Then be it so.

We will till then this merriment postpone.

Oh, for a dozen daughters such as she !

Once more I thee embrace.



Act V.



ACT V. SCENE I.

An apartment in the King's castle. *Queen, Bolerio, Fernando, Pedro, and a Lady of the Court* present.

Queen.

(Handing letters to *Fernando* and *Pedro*.)

Deliver each these letters,
And speed attend you both.

Fernando.

Madam, it shall.

[*Exeunt Fernando and Pedro.*

Queen.

(Coming forward.)

Would I could foresee
The end of this foul business, whose every thought,
Like lead, does weigh me down and drives
All but itself away!

Rebellion! Cursèd monster !
Wherefore art thou come to this, our kingdom ?
Where, not we alone, but Peace and Plenty reigned,
Where every man did verify content
In word and action—
Hell born thou art, and bred,

Thy legions, and thy abhorred agents all
 On thee attend, to do thy bidding—
 To overthrow all order, and to convert
 Peace, gentle Peace, from her gentility
 To hellish wreck and ruin.
 On Death thou smilest
 And thine arms extend, blood-smeared,
 To him in greeting;
 The widow and the orphan thou dost make,
 Thy jest, and from the breast
 The innocent babe thou pluck'st,
 Which thou dost, smiling, kill.

Oh, demon hideous !

Thy maw is limitless. Is it not enough
 That desolation like a spectre stalks
 O'er all the land which thou hast visited,
 But thou must howl for more ?
 Thou hast so well performed, so hellish well,
 That Pluto himself applauds
 Thy work, and the winged host, appalled,
 Their faces hide, and cry :
 " No more ! No more ! Hell hath itself outdone."
 What is the hour ?

Lady of the Court.

'T is nine and past, your Majesty.

Queen.

I thought 't was later.
 Mine eyes grow weary,
 And dull and heavy slumber steals upon me,
 Which I cannot resist. Let it have way—
 Arrange my chair, beseech you,

Face it toward the north, my custom ever,
So I may better sleep.

Lady of the Court.

Madam, we shall.

Queen.

'T is good; darken the lights;
Here will I rest a while ——

(Sits and falls asleep. Soft music.)

Bolerio.

She sleeps.

Lady of the Court.

Ay, but rests not.

(Curtain in rear opens, disclosing rebels and soldiery in conflict.)

Bolerio.

Look, she starts as she had something seen.

Lady of the Court.

Softly. Speak low. Let her sleep on.

Bolerio.

Again she starts, and hides her eyes
As from some horrid scene.

(Curtain closes.)

Lady of the Court.

Such sleep more harms
Than need of sleep not taken.
Madam, awake.

(*Queen* starts and arises.)

Queen.

Have done—have done—
Sleeping or waking, evermore pursued.
Enter *King*, attended.]
Why are you come, my Lord ?
I thought you now abed.

King.

Letter on letter crowding, all confirm
'T is he, the Duke of Combra.

Queen.

I had suspected any other man.

King.

His name and reputation spoke him good,
So good, that I did place him in the highest niche,
In my esteem.

Queen.

Some demon sure possessed him that he took
So foul a means to stain so fair a fame.

King.

But of Clarissa; she, you say, is missing.

Queen.

Since Monday last.

King.

I cannot now remember
Any act of mine should drive her hence.

Queen.

Nor I of mine.

King.

Perchance she hath to the city gone.

Queen.

For what purpose, pray ?

King.

She, too, may have a lover.

Queen.

Were ever mortals so perplexed as we ?
Our very household does our presence fly
To seek the embrace of Cupid ;
Carlotta did the example set ——

Enter *Clarissa*, as the *Princess*, veiled.]

King.

She comes. Let me thy form embrace.
Tell me, my sweet one, draws the time not near
When we shall see thee as thou shouldst appear ?

Clarissa.

In seven weeks more this veil I cast.

King.

Time will but go on crutches until then.

Clarissa.

I would not break my part-performed resolve.

Queen.

Resolves once made should carry to the end.

King.

So shall she hers, since she hath so resolved.

Clarissa.

I am in this most happy.

King.

Thy penance o'er, we will in jollity and feasting spend
A like expanse of time.

Queen.

So long ?

King.

One day of joy for each day's penance done.

Queen.

Continued pleasures, pleasures cease to be,
Most we enjoy whereof we least possess.

King.

Attends Bolerio in person here ?

Bolerio.

He does, my liege.

King.

Draw near. Canst thou prepare a feast ?

Bolerio.

I think I can.

King.

A goodly one, such as will tickle palates overcloyed
And make men eat despite their wish to do so ?

Bolerio.

Such a feast will I prepare
That age no less than youth shall smack his lips
And sigh, being full, for more.

King.

The occasion calls for it,—
On that same night our daughter's penance ends,
Let it then be done, with such additions,
Revelries, and sports, as thou canst best devise.

Bolerio.

My ingenuity to its uttermost tax
Shall answer it.

Queen.

And now, I pray you, leave us, leave us all,
And unto all, good-night.

[*Exeunt Suite.*

Clarissa.

Would you that I retire ?

King.

Would we that you retire ?
Thou all in all to us, beloved one, no;
Pleased am I most when thou art company.
Why have you lately held yourself reserved
From us, who love thee, and would do for thee
What best is for thy good ?
Love from love not runs, as thou from us,
When we do oft approach.

Clarissa.

The more thy love, the greater shame is mine,
That I so sinned 'gainst love.

King.

Let thy shame be light, as is in us remembrance
Of the deed of which thou art ashamed.

Clarissa.

I would fain go pray.

King.

Was ever man with so good daughter blessed ?
Would all were like thee.
Clarissa, now of all time, best could serve thee,
Best aid and comfort thee. You miss her much ?

Clarissa.

Very much.

Queen.

Did you by act or otherwise divine
Her going hence ?

Clarissa.

I did not.

Queen.

Seemed she not happy ?

Clarissa.

Very happy, and so expressed herself.

King.

The wonder is that one confessedly happy
Should surreptitiously herself convey
From those who made her happy ;

But we will take it as a strangeness in her,
A strangeness not unnatural to woman and so dismiss
it.

Clarissa.

I fear I weary and hold you from
What most you do require, refreshing slumber.

King.

Thou art in regard of us a thoughtful girl ;
We will anon to bed, and claim of morning
What the night shall borrow, so make us
Even with it.

And now, I pray you, listen,
Give good ear to what I now would speak,
For it concerns thee.

Clarissa.

Me ?

King.

Thee, child.

As should a wife unto her husband yield
In all things just, so hast thy loving mother
Unto me, in this that I would now the oft-talked
Subject broach of marriage.

Clarissa.

Of marriage ?

King.

Of marriage, daughter.
Barring thy penance, the present ever is the better
time ;

For we do deem it wise to do at once
What we have once resolved.
“ Barring thy penance,” thus it was I spoke;
Now it may be, and very properly,
Thy judgment is with thy contrition bettered,
Sobered, and set down to level of itself.

Clarissa.

I am not what I was.

King.

Thus conditioned, thou may’st haply see
Things as they are.
How long is it, think you,
Since first your sometime suitor did essay
To win your love ?

Clarissa.

I hold it not in memory;
Some sixteen months or longer ;
I cannot tell.

Queen.

And hath he not in all that lapse of time
The tender passion moved ?

Clarissa.

He hath not.

Which he perceiving,
His ruder spirit calling into play,
He sought, and very oft, to force consent.

King.

How say you,—force consent ?

Clarissa.

Very oft.

King.

Oh, wherefore mentioned you not this before ?
His face and gentleness did point him out
A gentleman true born.

Queen.

The face no more is index to the mind,
And man must be by his own actions judged ;
No standard else.

King.

Few men there are but they some virtue have,
Some tender chord within their bosoms placed,
Which, when 't is touched upon, sends forth, indeed,
A most melodious music.

Queen.

In him no virtue is, him to redeem.
I marvel much what peril doth in honesty abide
That man so shuns it.

King.

This with the letter makes the proof as strong
As we could wish.

Queen.

All is confirmed.

King.

Carlotta, here in the corridor lately has been found
An unsealed letter, by this same suitor writ
Unto a kinsman. Therein makes he known—

I blush to say it—that he did never love thee,
His purpose being—he himself avows—
To obtain the emoluments and the princely name
Which would with thee belong.

Queen.

A most audacious ruffian.

Clarissa.

I am glad you discovered this.

King.

A late discovery better is than none;
But we will of this matter nothing speak ;
Let him sue on, nor deem his little game
Of such importance as to wish it done.
It will not be for long.
Oh, that we only had the power to see
Man as he is, not as he often seems ;
To scan with equal ease the inner man
As is the outer seen ;
To know the mind's deep working,
And to know what damnèd villanies
Therein do lie, concealed with smiles
And base hypocrisy.

Queen.

This devil then had been a devil known.

King.

How stands the Duke of Combra in thy love ?

Clarissa.

As ever,
With such addition as the passing time
To true love gives.

King.

Had he but made his amorous passion known,
What peril to himself, what grief and care,
Had he not spared us all !

Clarissa.

He thought, my Lord, as I did,
That you your mind had on Fredrico fixed
Immovably. Love is a quality indefinable,
By no law governed, not accountable, being opposed,
For what it doeth.

King.

I know not whether that be so or no,
But we have sent for him, and expect his coming
This night a week.
Prepare thou then to wed him ; and may your lives
Both bright and prosperous be as have your
Loves been strong.

Clarissa.

What would I not speak,
But that great joy prevents it !

King.

He comes whom now we spoke of,
His eyes upon the floor in eager search.
He hath no doubt his ill-writ letter missed. ♦
He sees us not.

Queen.

How like a hypocrite he looks
Now that we know him one !

Enter *Fredrico*.]

Fredrico.

I crave your pardons,
A letter lost did keep my eyes away
From those they most should look on.
How fare your Majesties in health to-night ?

King.

Well.

Fredrico.

And you, fair Princess ? Nay, I know you 're well ;
The damask on thy cheek would it denote
But that thy veil conceals it.

Clarissa.

I thank you, well.

Fredrico.

Heaven be praised therefor ; for, indeed,
If we have health,
We have much more than can the world bestow,
With all its riches.

Queen.

Are you not well ?

Fredrico.

Well, but worried, a trifle worried,
About a letter, foolishly mislaid,
Or lost it may be.

King.

Where?

Fredrico.

In the castle here—or here or elsewhere;—
Certain 't is, 't is gone ; but where, I know not.

Queen.

Have you your person searched ?

Fredrico.

I have it not about me, that I know,
For I have searched.

King.

Where you have dropped it,
There it yet may lie.

Fredrico.

Indeed, I hope so, and that I may find it.
It were a dreadful matter, so it were,
To have one's lines by common people scanned.

King.

Was it for us intended ?

Fredrico.

No, no, your Majesty, although, indeed,
I would that you had seen it. A poem it was,
In very truth, a poem.
From first to last a poem, writ in prose,
And it the Princess' virtues did recount,
And my dear love for her.
But this my modesty had fain withheld,
Had circumstance not forced it.

Queen.

(Aside.)

How easy 't is to lie and wear the mask
Of sober honesty!
Let no man hence be trusted.

King.

Your modesty, no less your honesty, are virtues, sir,
You should, indeed, be proud of.

Fredrico.

Why, so I am, as who should not
That have them?

King.

With us, 't is bedtime.
Lovers are best alone, and it may be
You have a word to say.

Fredrico.

A word, ay, two or three.

King.

As you love her, make your parting brief;
Late is the hour, and she hath need of rest.

Fredrico.

Angels guard your Majesties.

[Exeunt *King* and *Queen*.]

Have you, Carlotta, my proposal pondered,
At our last meeting made, as then you promised?

Clarissa.

I have considered it.

(*King* and *Queen* appear, concealed, in background.)

Fredrico.

How say you ?
Can you with answer favorable make glad
A heart to you devoted ?
Or must it still in doubt and darkness throb,
A slave to fear and dread uncertainty ?

Clarissa.

Scarce dare we trust our own hearts ;
How much less, then, the hearts of others.

Fredrico.

The King, thy father, even now did say that I am
honest ;
And when I say I love thee, being honest,
What shouldst thou believe but that I love thee ?

Clarissa.

My heart responds not.
Hold not me to blame ; I cannot love you.

Fredrico.

By Heaven, you shall, though it be but assumed,
And of a kind by woman often used
To guile man into marriage.
Look you,
If they who lack it will protest their love,
What shall I believe but that thou hast it
Who protest it not ?

Clarissa.

That implies possession, which I lack,
As truly as I speak it.

Fredrico.

That I by nature favored should so sue,
And not be loved, outruns the stretch of reason.
I 'll not believe it.

Clarissa.

If you will teach me how you may believe
Against the use of reason, I pray you do so.
Have you your sight and hearing ?

Fredrico.

Woman ever is but what she seems.

Clarissa.

Therein most shamefully you do abuse
The noble name of woman.
Have you a mother ?

Fredrico.

She died.

Clarissa.

So, I doubt not, has her memory
In you who should respect it.

Fredrico.

Say that you love me, and no more I 'll rail,
No more abuse the noble name of woman.

Clarissa.

Where my love is,
There my love I 'll show.
And so I leave you.

Fredrico.

You stir not
Till I have forced from out your secret soul
I am of you beloved.

Clarissa.

What would you ?

Fredrico.

Force you to that you would not ;
Avow your passion, make it this night known ;
Or that or not, I care not, so you but say
You will alone be mine.

Clarissa.

Unhand me.

Fredrico.

Futile thy efforts when opposed
Against my strength and will.

Clarissa.

I will draw
The anger of the Court upon you.

Fredrico.

Come Hell and all its legionary imps, I care not ;
Methinks 't were easy as to wink, to kill,
This night, one hundred men.
Consent with me to wed,
Or be a witness to a deed of blood

(Draws dagger.)

Which I have sworn to do.

Clarissa.

Wilt thou murder me ?

Fredrico.

No, myself rather. Thus I set thee free,
While I am bound in fetters stronger far
Than ever felon staid. You hesitate, nor answer.
Then fix thine eyes upon me, and live free
From cankering remorse, if so thou canst.
I murder not myself ; thou murder'st me.

Clarissa.

Stay, stay thy hand ;
My doubts are all dispelled, thine act doth show,
More than mere words, thy love's true quality.

Fredrico.

Oh, say you so ?

Clarissa.

I now do make avowal of my love,
Which, doubting thine, till now I did withhold
To make avowal.

Fredrico.

Henceforth thy slave,
Command me what thou wilt.

(King and Queen withdraw.)

Clarissa.

I do command you forthwith to arise ;
I would myself unto no husband kneel,
Nor brook it in my husband.

Man and wife should be
In all things equal, yielding,
Nor view austere, each the other's faults,
As they were sins indeed—
Small faults, being dwelt on,
Very oft do grow to large proportions,
Oft end in misery and woe.

Fredrico.

Each day shall pattern that it follows ;
Each and all a copy to the world
Of wedded bliss immutable.

Clarissa.

Will you by me be willed ?

Fredrico.

In all things.

Clarissa.

Nor question reason for it ?

Fredrico.

Never.

Clarissa.

Then must you forthwith from the castle go,
Nor come again till I do send for you ;
Then will our nuptials be, and then I 'll reasons give
you,
Which, to hear, shall satisfy you fully.
The King and Queen
Will of your absence nothing curious seem.

It shall appear, so will I make it known,
You were upon some sudden business called,
And could stay not the courtesy of leaving.

Fredrico.

This I 'll do, or this or anything
You do command.

Clarissa.

Therein you please me.

Fredrico.

Take thou my ring, love's holy token take ;
It is with diamonds set and jewels rare ;
An antique ring, and sweet in memory
Of one dear soul departed.
I would not part it, but to give it thee,
For all the world ; therefore may you know
How dear I hold it, and thy love also.

Clarissa.

Wear mine for me,
A plain gold ring, with no bright diamond set,
Nor jewel rare, nor cluster round it
Hallowed memories ; yet I prize it much,
And give it thee to prove my love is such.

Fredrico.

I 'll wear it ever, ever think of thee.

Clarissa.

So will I thine,
And in thy absence, wishing thou wert near,
I 'll kiss it often, ever hold it dear.

Fredrico.

And must I, sweet one, from thy presence go,
Nor more behold thee, for so long a time ?

Clarissa.

It will not be for long.

Fredrico.

Where love is strong,
Love from love parted makes the minutes long
As hours in sickness spent.
I shall be ill till we again do meet.

Clarissa.

Brief parting often friendship recreates
And makes it stronger.

Fredrico.

But love is of a different quality ;
Love is love's nourishment, thereon alone it thrives,
And knows no surfeit. Of this food deprived,
Then grows it ill, and very often dies.
Well, I will go, and only say, good-night,
Good-night, my sweet.

Clarissa.

Good-night, my Lord,
My Lord, my love, good-night. [Exit *Fredrico*.
Well rid of. He thinks me but a fool ;
Himself, King Solomon. I 'll teach this knave
He yet might go to school
With profit to himself.

SCENE 2.

A landscape, to one side tents and *Soldiers*.

Corporal.

How comes it, Sergeant,
That this our third week out
Hath brought us not so many men by half
As did our former expeditions, in one third the time ?

Sergeant.

War is a thing the people tire of.

Corporal.

It must be so ;
Here we have drummed and drummed,
And poured our music and our efforts out
To no success.

Sergeant.

At first, as if to enter upon a dance,
They took to it with much spirit,
But now, like dance-wearied souls,
They care no more for it. They are satisfied.
That which to us is music at the first
Grows by its constant hearing to be discord.

Corporal.

They like it not as formerly.

Sergeant.

Here comes our Lieutenant ;
Strike up the drums again, that he may know
We are at least awake.
Enter *Lieutenant*.]

Lieutenant.

Good-evening, Sergeant.

Sergeant.

The like to you, sir.

Lieutenant.

How look the people on the kingdom's cause ?

Sergeant.

Badly as yet. This our fourth day here
Has brought his Majesty but three recruits.

Lieutenant.

Count them as none ;
The enemy o'erbears our firmest stand and holds
The advantage gained.

Sergeant.

What says the King to this ?

Lieutenant.

So is his mind upon the Princess fixed,
That he will brook no other subject talked,
Save what to her relates.

Sergeant.

Hath he lost his wits ?

Lieutenant.

The Queen, with judgment keen
To our necessity, makes good his lack.

Sergeant.

An impressment, as I take it.

Lieutenant.

Here are your orders : up tents and onward,
Let the dawn not break ere you set out.
I am on duty ordered. Fare you well.

[Exit *Lieutenant.*

Sergeant.

What news, think'st thou ?

Corporal.

Hath the enemy been taken ?

Sergeant.

Conscription is now the word.
To-morrow must we off to fright the minds
Of yon villagers.

Corporal.

Worse than a nightmare will our visit seem
To them, who dream not of it.
And what preposterous pretexts will they make
To claim exemption !
Many, with aches rheumatic, will limp along,
Seeking of passer-by assistance on,
Who ne'er felt pain till now, and might as models stand
For Hercules.
The deaf and dumb, a numerous throng, appear,
Each in his part rehearsed. Some will since yesterday
Have gone in years a good half-score,
And be by age exempt ;
And those who, when no war was, did proclaim

Their loyalty aloud now no allegiance owe.
The Quakers' creed forbids the use of arms ;
Many will needs be Quakers.

Sergeant.

Ay, quake, lest they be doubted Quakers.

Corporal.

Alas ! how many will have suddenly become
In their best sense affected, and grope,
With baize o'er-covered vision, with aid of staff,
Their devious ways along.
'T is even said men from their hands
Have their base fingers cut
Ere they would risk them on the tented field,
They did so hate to serve their country.

Sergeant.

Would the power were mine
To place such cowards in the foremost ranks,
Where, to the liveliest music of the foe,
They should be danced to the death.

Corporal.

But look where come the right sort of conscripts ;
Greet them, Sergeant, greet them.
Let 's have sport.

Sergeant.

I will pay them soldierly respect ;
I will salute them.

Enter Rosetta and Floretta.]

Good-evening, fair ones.

Floretta.

Sirs, the same to you.

Sergeant.

'T is a fine day, what 's left of it.

Rosetta.

Indeed, sir, 't is very fine.

Corporal.

Is it far you travel ?

Rosetta.

To the village yonder.

Sergeant.

How far is it thither, pray ?

Floretta.

But two short miles.

Corporal.

Are there short and long miles then ?

Rosetta.

That mile is short, when goes your mind along ;
A mind unwilling makes a long mile.

Sergeant.

The night goes rapidly on,
And will, I fear, o'ertake you.

Floretta.

We have an early moon will see us on ;
Besides, there are of us a dozen in our rear.
We shall not lack for company.

Corporal.

Oh, ho, the advance guard only.
Fear you not to travel by night ?

Rosetta.

Alas, no !

What should we fear, being but homely
Lassies, and possessed of nothing !

Sergeant.

Oh, what a mine of unknown wealth is here !
You are more rich than now you will confess.

Rosetta.

What call you rich ?
Of money I have none ; and if I had,
I still would think me poor, deeming
Him rich alone who title bears.

Sergeant.

Beauty is a more valuable acquisition
To woman than title, for does not title stoop
To beauty, be it of origin ever so humble ?
And in beauty, my lassie, thou art a very peer.

(The *Corporal* and *Floretta* go apart.)

Rosetta.

How you flatter !

Sergeant.

Not I, indeed.
Who knows a soldier flatterer, knows him
I never heard of. It lies not in our art to flatter,

Unless to flatter be to tickle men
With bayonet double-edged, with sharpened sword,
With ball, with bullet, and like pleasing things,
To cause them cry you mercy, and to make
Death and destruction on their faces sit.
This I have done, seen done, must do.

Rosetta.

That is a duty, sir.

Sergeant.

But look you, how the Corporal seems overcome.

Corporal.

In thee Dame Nature bountifully shows.
Believe me, sweet, thou art her favorite,
Chosen to express her defftest skill
And outqueen fairest beauty.

Sergeant.

Did you hear that ?
Look how she yields to his soft words
Her lips.

Rosetta.

What say you now of your soldier
Flatterer ?

Sergeant.

He 's no soldier, only a Corporal.

Rosetta.

A Corporal no soldier ! Ha, ha, ha ! but listen.

Corporal.

Oft we speak, oft wish our words unspoken ;
So do I mine. Those lips divine
Are none of Nature's moulding. No,
Thou art of Heaven descended
To thrill man's heart, and by comparison with mortal
show
The homeliness of woman.

Sergeant.

Heaven so keep my tongue
That flattery come not near it.

Floretta.

Speak you this in truth ?

Corporal.

As I am a soldier.

Sergeant.

To flattery prone, this maid henceforth
Will with the angels soar ;
Too heavenly good for earth.

Rosetta.

Here come the others. Now must we along.

Sergeant.

You are in good time.

Enter numerous *Village Girls*. The moon rises.]

Come hither, Chick

Bella.

Chick, call'st thou me Chick ?

Sergeant.

Child, love, to please thee.

Bella.

Child ?

Sergeant.

I did forget
Maids would be women called.
What is thy name ?

Bella.

Bella.

Sergeant.

A pretty name. Is there no more of it ?

Bella.

More would spoil it.

Sergeant.

So, indeed, it would. Come, look up cheerily.
Art thou not happy ?

Bella.

Very unhappy.

Sergeant.

So young and yet unhappy ! What lack'st thou ?

Bella.

A husband.

Sergeant.

A husband, thou talk'st of a husband !
Thou art not yet fifteen, nor yet from school.

Bella.

There art thou wrong. I am this day from school ;
And as for age, come Christmas, I shall be ——

Sergeant.

Prythee, how old ?

Bella.

Sir, seventeen years.

Sergeant.

So old, and still unmarried ?
Nay, then, I wonder not that you are sad.
Let me advise you. Stand not on choice ;
Ask the first lad you will. If he consent, marry him.
In four years more, when hath your mind matured,
You might not care to marry. There 's danger in
delay.

Of course, 't is better you should marry now,
And repent after, than to wait long,
And perchance ne'er marry, of course.

Bella.

Of course 't is. I thank you ;
The advice is good and I will act on it.

Floretta.

Come, girls !
Our expectations in yonder village lie,
And we must hence, or lose them.

Soldier-Philosopher.

Is expectation ever realized ?
True pleasure but in the anticipation lies ;
The act itself doth rarely furnish it.
The boy, unhappy with the restraints of youth,
For manhood sighs, and the coming time,
Thence to escape the fear-inspiring gaze
Of the birch-uplifting Pedant, spectacled.
Manhood thinks pleasure dwells in youth alone,
And fain would live his boyhood o'er again.
The bachelor and Benedict, each alike
His unhappy fate bemoans.
On sea, the sailor thinks alone of land,
And being on shore, sighs for the sea again.
The poor for riches, the rich more riches wish,
Hoping therewith true pleasure still to find,
Which now they have not.
Thus, phantom-like, true pleasure is pursued,
And never captured. And thus it will be
Till Angel Gabriel shall his trumpet sound
The doom of all things earthly.

Rosetta.

Who is this man ?

Sergeant.

This is our Soldier-Philosopher.
A soldier who never yet saw battle,
And would swoon at sight of blood.

Floretta.

How strange, Philosophy and Warfare !
Two opposites.

Sergeant.

But listen, he 's full of it.
Ladies, will you be seated ?

Rosetta.

How comes it you 're a soldier ?

Soldier-Philosopher.

Nay, who knows ; I myself know not.
What we are, we are not so from choice,
But as we are led. Puppets, in the hand of fate,
We move as we are moved.

Floretta.

Ambition led him to it.

Soldier-Philosopher.

So high ambition soars
We strain ourselves with reaching ;
Oft from reaching, fall,
And no more rise.

Village Girls.

Good, good ! Ha, ha, ha !

Rosetta.

Thou art already famous.

Soldier-Philosopher.

What 's fame, unless it be a name for good
Deeds done—but breath—a grave ;
Perchance, a monument ; —a monument,
A mockery, what more, to teach man

What he is, not what he was.
 The peasant's happy lot by king is envied ;
 His jewelled crown is oft a jewelled care,
 And weighs with sorrow down.

Village Girls.

Excellent ! Ha, ha, ha !

Floretta.

Are you not happy, are you not content ?

Soldier-Philosopher.

Time, place, nor circumstance contentment brings.
 It is within us always, only we deny it to ourselves.
 (*Village Girls laugh in ridicule.*)

Rosetta.

Be advised in time. Consult a doctor ;
 Untimely taken, maladies become
 To the best skill unmanageable.

Soldier-Philosopher.

Have at me, girls. Let me be food for fun.

Floretta.

Indeed, 't is true, sir. Our ailments let run
 Grow worse and worse. Do not the doctor shun.
 (*All laugh.*)

Soldier-Philosopher.

Will you have more ?

Rosetta.

More you have not to give.

Floretta.

You are already empty ;
Empty as bottle in a toper's hand, top down.

Soldier-Philosopher.

Let me think.

Rosetta.

Give him leave to think.

Floretta.

He has our leave ;
As well our leave to leave us.

Rosetta.

Heaven look kindly on us,
Cut short his thoughts, and bring him
To the ending suddenly.

Soldier-Philosopher.

I have it.

Village Girls.

Hear, hear !

Soldier-Philosopher.

Shall man of Heaven, for heavenly deeds created,
No more perform, than must the brute,
That eats and breathes by nature,
And be content ?
Ye powers above, who all serenely in the heavens sit,
And note our doings here, give, oh, give it
Unto man to do some noble deed for man,

That it may in the eye of Heaven live
And bear him grace hereafter.

(Village Girls all laugh aloud.)

Floretta.

If this your mood is, faith, I pity you.
Soldiers, fare you well. Come, girls.

Soldier-Philosopher.

Here 's entertainment good, and good enough ;
And better 't is that we should this enjoy
Than in expectancy to further seek,
And so, perchance, lose all.
The poor keep poor by passing trifles by
Whereon the wise grow rich.

Rosetta.

Our partners even now await us
For the dance.

Sergeant.

A dance ?
How say you to a little practice here ?

Rosetta.

I care not if we do.

Floretta.

Nor I. Are you all agreed ?

Village Girls.

We are, we are.

Corporal.

First a song, and afterward a dance.

Rosetta.

Who shall sing it ?

Sergeant.

That will I.

I will rhyme you on the words " folly " and " jolly,"
With variations, the night long.

Bella.

Is it extempore ?

Floretta.

What 's that ?

Bella.

Why, sung off-hand.

Sergeant.

Of course 't is ; all songs and speeches
Are extempore that are claimed to be so.

Bella.

Well, begin.

Sergeant.

(Sings.)

Come, lads and lassies, partners choose,
And for the nonce be jolly ;
The saddest heart shall sadness lose ;
We 'll dance away such folly.

(*Chorus.*)

All 's folly, naught but folly,
Save what we do to make us jolly.

Chorus repeated by all.)

The King did grieve his daughter gone,
He wept who once was jolly ;
If he would turn to sunshine, storm,
He 'd dance away such folly.

(*Chorus as before.*)

The would-be wise, so much they know,
Look grave and melancholy ;
But they could best their wisdom show
To dance away their folly.

(*Chorus* as before.)

Corporal.

Now let us take advantage of brief time
And foot it nimbly.

(A dance.)

Floretta.

Our thanks are yours ; accept them,
Good sirs. Good-night.

Sergeant.

Good-night.

Now each man to his tent, and of a far-spent night
Snatch him what rest he may ;
To-morrow will be to us a busy day.
Enter the *Duke* and *Princess* lovingly.]

Princess.

I like not to praise myself ;
And to dispraise one's self were to solicit praise ;
So prythee, therefore, let 's talk of other matter.

Duke.

The wise are modest and themselves not praise.
Modesty is the bloom
Which to the cheek of beauty gives perfection.
It well becomes thee,

And I would all women had been born like thee,
Then long ago had died immodesty.
I would not with an immodest woman wed,
Though she should outqueen beauty, and possess
The wealth of the world.

Princess.

Whither go we now ?

Duke.

This, as I take it, is the road.

Princess.

It seems we never shall arrive there.

Duke.

An hour's walk will bring us to the house
Wherein does dwell the sealer of our joy ;
'T is yonder, and now I look with a more careful eye,
I do observe it. See you those chimneys that appear
Above the head of yonder darkened mass ?

Princess.

I do see something.

Duke.

And note you, too, the spire of the church
Just to the left ?

Princess.

Right well.

Duke.

It seems to beckon us unto that joy
Which there awaits us.

Princess.

Heaven itself doth seem to wish us well,
For see you how beautifully smiles the moon upon us.

Corporal.

(Aside.)

He 'll make as good a soldier as we have ;
Let 's seize him !

Sergeant.

Hold ! Be not too hasty.

Duke.

Think you will Clarissa carry well her part ?

Princess.

She is by nature fully made up for such work.

Duke.

What think you when of this their Majesties
Make discovery ?

Princess.

What becomes it us to froth and fume,
When for a deed there is no remedy,
Except in that we give vent to a spleen
Which held, were hurtful to us ?

Duke.

What are these, till now unnoticed ?

Princess.

These are soldiers of the King, my father's army.

Duke.

Yonder 's a bank ; do thou upon it sit,
While I inquire of them the nearest way.

[Exit *Princess.*

Duke.

So please you, gentlemen,
Which of these two roads will sooner
Take me to the village yonder ?

Sergeant.

(Seizing him.)

Short road nor long take you to-night.

Duke.

Unhand me !

Corporal.

Unhand thee, ha, ha, ha !
You make us laugh.
From this time your service is the King's.

Duke.

I have no King.

Sergeant.

No King, you traitorous thing !
Nay, you had best be quiet,
We carry swords.

Duke.

(Breaking away.

And so have I a sword, you worse than cowards.

Corporal.

By all that 's earthly, the vagabond has a sword
And wears, too, the habit of a Lord.

Sergeant.

He but usurps some high authority,—follow me.

Duke.

And find your way to instant thirsty hell,
For thither will I send you,
You base degraders of the name of soldier.

Sergeant.

Down with him!

Duke.

Threats are cowards' deeds;
Valor unboasting strikes.
I do more fear a dozen cats than you.

Sergeant.

Shall we submit to this, and ne'er stir?
Come on I say!

(They fight; *Soldiers* issue from tents and surround the *Duke*.)

Carlotta rushes in.)

Carlotta.

What mean these noises, surely 't is not he!
Gentlemen, forbear and touch not him.

Corporal.

Begone!

Carlotta.

Have you no pity? You yourselves have loved.
Begone I will not; he and I are one.

Sergeant.

Who art thou ?

Carlotta.

Alas, a poor unlucky wretch am I
Crossed in the very tide of joy !

Sergeant.

Thrust her off.

Princess.

Stones may have pity, but no pity, man.

Sergeant.

On with him.

Princess.

Now Heaven help me, lost am I indeed.

(The *Duke* is forced struggling into a tent. The *Princess* falls
fainting to the ground.)



Act VI.



ACT VI. SCENE I.

The throne room in the King's castle. *Suite* in attendance.
The *King* and *Queen*, crowned, standing together well forward. A period of seven weeks is supposed to have elapsed between this and preceding act.

Queen.

Once more we live, once again breathe
An atmosphere from foul contagion free,
And all the clouds that lately o'er us hung
Are by the glorious sun dispelled and gone;
Beaten, the rebels, as I hear, are fled.

King.

So rumor hath it,
But we the truth shall very shortly hear;
Look, he comes who can relieve our fear.

Enter *Rinaldo*.]

Rinaldo.

All is confirmed;
Rebellion's head is severed, and its body,
Reminder merely of the thing it was,
Lies bleaching on the plain.

Queen.

There let it lie for birds of prey to pick.

Rinaldo.

Letters, your Majesty. (Hands letters.)
The Duke himself, his business done,
In person soon will come,
And presently be with you.

Queen.

Leave us.

[Exit *Rinaldo*.]

(The *King* and *Queen* read and exchange letters.)

Queen.

'T is brief, and writ in confirmation,
With such additions as, indeed, do make
The victory complete.

King.

'T is modesty itself ;
Not to himself he takes the credit due,
But places it on others.
Modesty and brief speaking,
Twin virtues, to this world but little known,
And seldom practised ; Enter *Bolerio*.]
Haply come, Rebellion's day is done.

Bolerio.

Long may you reign in peace.

King.

Let us the story hear, when, where, and how
The Duke of Combra, no allegiance owing,
No application making, entered the army,
And in one full bound the highest honors reached.

Bolerio.

Bending his thoughts on love,
The Duke, disguised, was by the soldiers seized,
And sent hurriedly to the front.
In brief time,—
In him perceiving a marked ability,—
Advancement followed.
At length, next to the head he stood,
And second on the list ;
The opportunity at last arrived ; the General fell ;
The Duke, now in command, with tactics new
And artful strategy the enemy o'erwhelmed.

King.

Would we had daughters three,
All should be his. Who shall now assert
Fair Fortune is not with us!

Queen.

Not one.

King.

O Fortune's a giddy goddess,
Inconstant as the wind, or maid's affections,
Changeable as snow, which melts while it doth fall ;
She leads us but to leave us, oft most bountiful
Where least she promises ;
How like is she to those delusive hopes
Which hourly centre in the hearts of man,
And come to nothing ;
Some from the cradle she accompanies
To the cold grave, wherein, all tenderly, she lays them
down

To their last sleep ;
These are the few, the chosen few,
Who seldom feel her thorns, but scent alone
The perfume of her rose her queenly favors ;
Wealth to wealth she adds,
Then oft with envy frowning, takes it all,
And leaves her victim poorer than the poor,
With knowledge of the loss of what he had.
O Fortune,
Wherefore dost thou upon the poor,
The suffering poor, that most deserve of thee,
Thy coldest shoulder turn,
And modest merit all unnoticed leave,
To struggle on unknown ?
Enough of this.
The joy I feel 'till now hath been not,
Nor will come again.
Let us be seated, and the time beguile
With music and dance.

Queen.

How long is it to wait ?

King.

Within the hour comes the joyous time
By her appointed, when she shall show her face.

Queen.

Punctilious daughter who on trifles sticks!

King.

Let 's be seated.

Enter *Clarissa*.]

Clarissa. (Disguised as *Carlotta*.)

(Aside.)

She should be here

In keeping with the note which she did send ;

But yet I see her not. Oh, much I fear

What 's past is naught to that which draweth near.

King.

Sweet, sit thee here.

(To *Bolerio*.)

Begin.

(*Clarissa* sits at foot of throne. A dance, upon termination of which the castle bell rings. *King* and *Queen* descend throne. *Clarissa* arises.)

King.

The time is come,

Shine forth thy beauteous self.

(*Clarissa* unveils and kneels before them.)

King.

By heaven, what 's this I see ! *Clarissa* !

Queen.

Treachery, treachery.

King.

Where can our daughter be ?

Enter *Carlotta*.]

Carlotta.

Deeply repentant, she doth now appear.

Rushes forward and is caught in the arms of the *King*. The

Queen comes forward and paces angrily. *Carlotta*
embraces *Clarissa*.)

Queen.

Why, what a piece of villainy is here!
Maid and daughter both—for two long months
To be thus played upon—
Why, then my crown 's as well beneath my feet,
Since 't is become the jest of waiting-maids,
For here it serves me nothing.

(*Queen continues to pace, King following.*)

King.

Let us look lightly on this offence.

Queen.

Hast thou all manhood lost,
That thou canst suffer this so dastard act,
Against our precious persons
And ne'er wince!

King.

Be yourself.

Queen.

Am I a Queen, or do I dream me one !
Farewell all quality, for I have lived
To be the cuffed of my messengers.

King.

Reason with yourself.

Queen.

Oh, I could loose my blood for very rage,
And laugh, as from my purple veins
It leaves me!

King.

What need you make yourself a laughing-stock,
A jester to your own Court !

Queen.

(To *Clarissa*.)

Thou scurvy trickster, base ingrate, wretch,
That bear'st the form of woman, yet art not,
Is this thy gratitude, this thy thanks,
Who, when thou wast left an infant at our gates,
We out of very pity took thee in, and clothed and fed
thee,
Taught thee, and did shower on thee our
Gracious favors,
As thou had'st been our daughter!

Clarissa.

Beseech you hear me.

Queen.

Than thou, I had the devil rather hear,
Who knows no seeming.

Carlotta.

On me, your daughter, your displeasure fall;
I am alone at fault, and being alone,
Let me alone be censured.
The heaviest punishment thou canst devise
Shalt be with pleasure by thy daughter borne,
So she, my maid, do suffer not for me,
Who, but for me, had never sin committed.

Queen.

Why, what a thing art thou in mould of maid,
Who think'st to heat and cool me at thy will.

(To *Clarissa*.)

This thine act—said I an act—
Oh, villainy—oh, villainous act—but let me

Not wag my tongue in uselessness;
From this time forth
Thou art banished our kingdom.

King.

Thou art too severe.

Carlotta.

Good mother ——

Queen.

Attempt no more
With sweet and cunning terms to win me back,
For you shall find me as the granite is,
Yea, firm as steel.

(Carlotta and Clarissa walk toward exit.)

Clarissa.

Farewell forever, then, all worldly joy,
For what is banishment but living death,
To live restrained from where we most would live,
Where live our hearts, our hopes, our every thought,
Oh, torture most complete!
Who would not rather meet the dread hereafter,
Braving the chances of those ills to come,
Than here to dwell in lifelong misery!

Carlotta.

Fear not you; when she shall cool,
Then will I ply her for thy reinstatement.

(They embrace. Exit Clarissa.)

King.

The entertainment waits.
Come, let us unto our guests our promise keep,
Who now look wondering on.
What 's next on the list?

Bolerio.

A dance, your Majesty.

King.

A dance or what you will.

(A dance is given.)

Queen.

Music more sweet or more inspiring
I did never hear.

Carlotta.

Mother,
If you did ever bear your daughter love,
Keep not from me, I pray you, some present show of it,
For now of all time have I most need of it.

Queen.

What would you ?

Carlotta.

'T is of Clarissa.
Fain would I have her still my maid.

Queen.

I am not angry now, and do not speak
As one in passion, who, when she is cool,
Recalls what she hath said;
Therefore take note,
That never more to me she ope her lips
In way of speech, never do look on me.
When she sees me, let her see me not,
As I shall see her not,
So help me Heaven.

[Exit *Carlotta*.

Enter *Pedro*.]

Pedro.

An old, poor man,
Infirm and weather-stained,
As one who had travelled far,
Begs audience.

King.

Age and infirmity,
His poverty no less, shall give him entrance.
Treat him with kindness, sir,
We will ourselves extend a welcome hand.

Enter *Pedro* and *Urbanio*.]

Urbanio.

My blessing on you both.

King.

And ours on thee.
Pray you, be seated. Com'st thou afar?
Some wine, Rinaldo. Prythee, sir, partake.

Urbanio.

I will and thankfully, for I have need.
I did think
The poor alone did charity dispense,
According to his means, and alone gave
A heartfelt welcome.

King.

Who art thou?

Urbanio.

A tool in Fortune's hand, to cut and carve with.
I have lived, mankind avoiding, these eighteen years,
In parts remote—no friend seeing,

Nothing hearing, of country or of home.
Home, I have no home!
Banished and bereft of all things dear,
With treason charged, on accusation false,
Against the King—the King—ye gods,
Whom I did better than Urbanio love!

King.

Art thou Urbanio?
Thou the banished Duke?

Urbanio.

A shred of him. At further time
I might some trouble have to know myself.

King.

Timely come; vainly we have sought thee
For many years, to set thee right
In fortune and in name. Thine accuser,
Conscience-stricken, himself did kill.

Urbanio.

Fortune, good and bad, doth ever come
In groups and galloping.

Queen.

The injury we have done thee
We will at once repair; thy title and estates,
And all thereto belonging,
Are again yours.

Urbanio.

Heaven bless thee!
My wife, at thought of banishment,
Sickened and died, and left

An infant, whose tender years
Did fit it not for travel. It was left
At the palace gates.

King.

A daughter ?

Urbanio.

All that was left to me in the world.
With her was left a paper, thereon writ :
“ Blesséd be
They who receive and care for me,
I am of gentle birth.”

*Enter Carlotta and Clarissa, each dressed in her proper
raiment.]*

King.

The very same, thy daughter lives,
And yonder comes. Clarissa,
This is thy father. He will tell thee all.
(Urbanio and Clarissa embrace.)

Urbanio.

If now to die
Were now to be absolved of all my sin,
Now could I wish to die,
Now to pass hence to immortality.

*(Urbanio and Clarissa come forward and converse. A flourish
of trumpets without. Enter Pedro.)*

Pedro.

The Duke of Combra.

Enter the Duke, who is met by Carlotta, whom he embraces.]

King.

A thousand welcomes, my Lord.

Queen.

We give you hearty greeting,
And are much bound in love and gratitude ;
Our hearts, henceforth, are yours.

Duke.

Speak not of that.

King.

All that we have, or shall possess,
Equally with ourselves you shall enjoy,
As it alone were yours.

Duke.

Our hearts as one, consent our hands to join,
That I in gratitude may you outweigh,
And still remain your debtor.

King.

Heaven give you joy of her !
Ere you did come, my Lord, of you did come
A many a good report, of you, your lineage, and true
 descent,
But this were needless ;
You might yourself have borne the good report
In your own person hither,
For who could look thy face and form upon,
And not in very verity proclaim
Thee nobly born ?

Duke.

Most royal sir.

King.

The mood is now upon me, let me speak.
Thy father was a man of noble mien,
So kingly, yet so kind, even to the humblest;
Beloved of all his people, who, when he went
Among them, did disdain not to take each
Proffered hand
As it had been his equal.
The sick he cared for, and in person sought
Where good might most be done.
In thee I see his copy, whose remembrance
Gives thee a heartier welcome.

Duke.

What shall I say in thanks?

King.

My Lord Fredrico, hearing of your coming,
Hath importuned me to request of you
A friendly contest with him at fence,
Wherein he credits to himself much skill,
And, as he hears, you are yourself well known
In like regard. I make this known
In keeping only of a promise made.

Duke.

To what end is this?
Suggests he no reason for it?

King.

To season with variety, and add
A spice to the coming festivities.

Queen.

So he says, my Lord.

Duke.

'T is reason good enough.

King.

That is his plea,
His purpose only he himself doth know,
And no man else.

Queen.

What hidden motive, born of jealousy,
May underlie his wish, we cannot now divine,
But at your sword's length keep him;
Hold him off, and watch him with a very wary eye.

Duke.

Was not he the one-time suitor
For the hand of the Princess?

King.

The same.
He yet doth think his chances therein good;
Let it appear so to the end, whose suddenness
Shall all the more affect him; for reasons
Which I hereafter will relate,
I more and more detest him.

Duke.

I like it well and am ready,
Even upon the instant,
To make trial of it.

King.

But where is my Lord,
The suitor to the hand of our fair daughter?

Bolerio.

Not yet come.

King.

Then love goes limping, and is colder grown
Than was his wont.

Why, I remember, when myself a youth,
A stripling then, ay, scarcely in my teens,
The thought of love did so inspire my blood
That like a mighty river, bursting bounds,
'T would rush my veins thro',
Making my heart to throb, my head to turn,
Myself to lose myself. But let it pass.
We who are old shall feel the spark no more,
And yield unwillingly our places up
To nimbler spirits, who in turn, like we,
Must yield them too, to those who after come.

(The *Duke* and *Princess* come forward and converse. Enter
Fredrico.)

King.

Welcome, my Lord.

You have o'erstaid the time, but what of that?
Our daughter is not gone in years so far
That an odd hour or two can make her
The worse for it.

Fredrico.

Necessity —

King.

Necessity is father to us all
And will command us, whether we will or no,
In all save love affairs.

Fredrico.

Your Majesty is merry.

King.

So should he be who comes to win
The hand of so fair maid.

Fredrico.

Who is he, your Majesty,
Whispering the Princess ?

King.

One, sir, who seeing Father Time
Ahead of him, o'ertook him, outran him,
And is come before him.
My Lord of Combra.

Duke.

Your pardons all—
With such attraction, King Solomon himself
Had lost his wisdom. Sir, your hand;
I wish you well, although to do so
Were to wish, indeed, some evil 'gainst myself.

Fredrico.

How may that be, my Lord ?

Duke.

Why, we are two, and one of us, but one,
Can hope to win it.

Fredrico.

Speak you of the bout ?

Duke.

Ay, the bout.

Fredrico.

I shall do my best to win it
For her sweet sake.

Duke.

I blame you not;
A fairer, worthier lady never lived
Since first in Eden's Garden Eve did come
To breed contention in the envious eye
Of woman loving man.

Fredrico.

But come,
No lover true did ever wait on time.

Duke.

At your service, sir.

(*King and Queen* seated on the throne. *Carlotta* at foot of throne. *Duke and Fredrico* salute throne and commence.)

Fredrico.

How like you my quality ?

Duke.

It tastes well.

Fredrico.

A bitter taste, methinks.

Duke.

Something that way.

Fredrico.

I am he will wind you, my Lord.

Duke.

Think you so? What, so soon!
Where is your mettle now?

Fredrico.

I am still for you.

(*Fredrico* is disarmed; a flourish of trumpets. *Duke* and *Carlotta* embrace. *King* descends throne.)

Queen.

Well done, well won!

King.

As freely she, as freely we
Do give her hand to thee,
And may you ever live as you have loved,
Inseparably.

Fredrico.

Hold! hold!

King.

What's the matter?

Fredrico.

To hell with jugglery
That one day gives, and takes it away the next,
Plays shuttlecock with hope
And man's affection, and makes
Angel or devil of him!
Am I an ass? Must I endure all this,
And bray not? No protest make?
Submit submissively unto a wrong
Which cries aloud for vengeance?

King.

Vengeance !

Queen.

You go beyond the limit;
Restrain your tongue;
Your words comport not with
Our presence, sir.

Fredrico.

Have I not cause, good Madam ?
What of my claim, what, I pray, of that ?

Queen.

Make good your claim,
If any claim you have.

Fredrico.

Did I not have your voices her to woo ?
Did I not have your voices her to win ?
Win her I did, by her own voice declared,
And having won her, mine 's the right to wed.

Queen.

This is rank lunacy.

Carlotta.

Consent of mine, my Lord, you never had.

Fredrico.

Why, you yourself did give your heart to me,
And with this ring did seal it.

Carlotta.

That ring, my Lord, did ne'er belong to me.

Fredrico.

O Lord ! O Heaven ! Do I stand here ?
Or do I dream ? Veiled,
You gave it me, and vowed
You would alone be mine.

Clarissa.

Let 's see the ring; 't was mine;
I gave it thee, and this was yours, which you did
give to me.

Fredrico.

Thee !

Clarissa.

The story 's good, we 'll tell it thee anon.
Will you wed with me, my Lord ?

Fredrico.

Any woman else.

Clarissa.

As you like, my Lord.

Fredrico.

Here, take your ring.
I would not wed with you,
Were you of womankind
The very last.

Clarissa.

One alone makes not a match, my Lord.

(*Fredrico* comes well forward.)

Fredrico.

(Aside.)

Shall I submit to this, meekly
And bend low in servile attitude
The suppliant knee, or be the man I am ?
Let him who favors seek, let him do that ;
With me, all now is done, and I am left
But my revenge to get. Revenge which
Sweeter is than all things else in the world.
He fences well, and killed the chance to wing him,
As 't were by accident, which I had sought.
I 'll play the coward then,
Prick him from behind, and send him
To his accounting suddenly.
About it then, while yet my purpose hold,
And hell be mine if I, in this, grow cold.

Carlotta.

He broods some mischief.

Duke.

Do not fear.
Who mischief means
Forewarns not him 't is meant for.

(*Fredrico goes to rear.*)

Queen.

I long to hear, so do we all,
From thine own lips, in detail, all that may relate,
Or touch upon, thy doings 'gainst the enemy
Since you the army entered—which time, disguised,
Carlotta with the holy friars staid,
And watched events, listening no reverent teaching
As I fear, but deep immured in love.

Carlotta.

Prythee, tell it;
That do I long to hear.

Duke.

To Heaven, not to us, belongs the victory;
We but the instruments here to fulfill
His will divine. Thus, then, begins my story,
Thus must it end, in praises unto God.

Queen.

Henceforth, my duty first shall be
To Heaven.

Fredrico.

(*Aside.*)

Or now or never,
Weapon do thy worst.

(*Fredrico* makes a thrust at the *Duke* from behind, but is intercepted by *Bolerio*, who strikes down his sword. *Fredrico* receives the thrust of the *Duke*, and falling, is caught and upheld in the arms of a *Courtier*.)

Fredrico.

Curses upon you all—I 'm done for—
Not so—my sword—strength have I yet—
What mockery 's this—hence—hence I say—
Water—clutch me not at the throat—water—
Let go I say—I die—die—Hell—

Duke.

He is rightly served
Who meets the death
By him for others fixed.

King.

O Retribution, thou art swift afoot,
And follow'st fast the deed.

Queen.

Remove the body to the inner chamber;
His death 's upon himself.
At other time, with all due form,
According to our church's ritual,
This match we'll solemnize.

King.

Come, to the banquet hall;
There awaits us a feast you dream not of.
We will of music have a merry strain,
Such as from men their angry natures turn
To mirth.

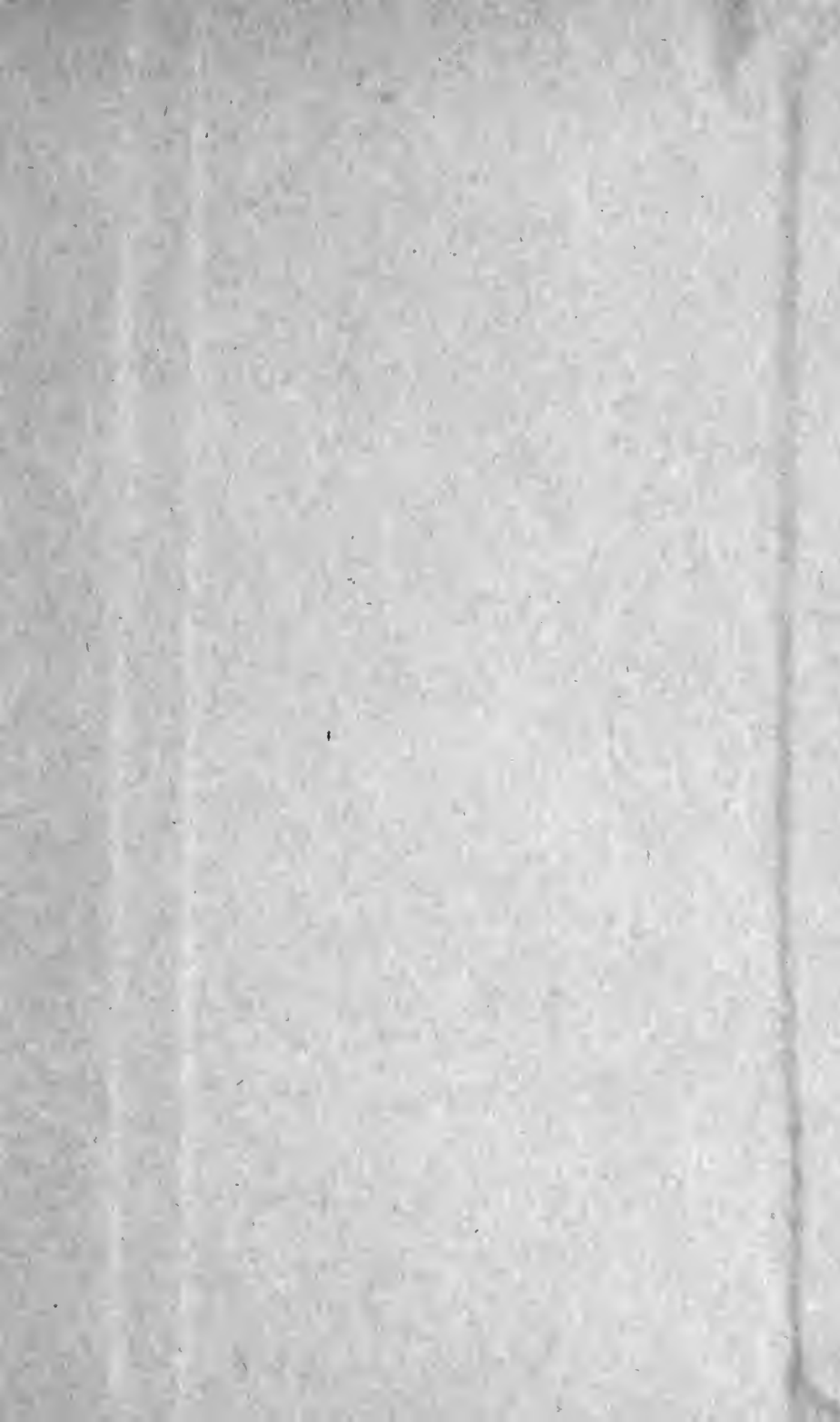
Go you without, and to my subjects say
The King proclaims a general holiday.
Sweet, lead the way,
Ourselves will follow fast ;
Carlotta and the Duke are one at last.

(Music.)

END.







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